

An Answer to a God's Prayer

by mcknight93

Category: Halo, Mortal Kombat

Genre: Adventure

Language: English

Characters: Master Chief/John-117, Raiden

Status: In-Progress

Published: 2014-01-17 18:19:26

Updated: 2015-08-12 22:44:55

Packaged: 2016-04-27 03:44:27

Rating: M

Chapters: 3

Words: 25,001

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: When Liu Kang defeated Goro and Shang Tsung in the tenth Mortal Kombat tournament, Raiden notices his amulet continues to crack. Connected to his visions of the future, Shao Kahn's conquest of Earthrealm was all but certain. Hoping to prevent such an apocalyptic outcome, Raiden prays to the Elder Gods. What happens when they answer? They summon a Spartan-II.

1. Chapter 1

****Hello there, mcknight93 here with a brand new crossover between Halo and Mortal Kombat. Where the Master Chief is thrown in the Mortal Kombat world. This story follows the events after Halo 4 and during Mortal Kombat 2011. The story itself will take place after the first Mortal Kombat tournament, where Liu Kang has defeated Goro and Shang Tsung, and saved Earthrealm. Our Spartan-II will land before the second tournament.****

****I would like to thank Carleen, WeepingCadaver, and Lord Izanagi for beta reading this story. They were a tremendous amount of help. I would also like to thank creamofwheat2311 on giving me the idea on how strong the Infinity's shields could be. There is also Freedom Guard and HarbingerofChaos on giving me the okay sign on how I wrote my godly character's dialogue.****

****A word of warning though, Sarah Palmer might seem a little out of character at first but that is because I dedicate that to a good friend of mine and for other specific reasons. ****

****Remember: This story follows the events after Halo 4 and during Mortal Kombat 2011. The story itself will take place after the first Mortal Kombat tournament, where Liu Kang has defeated Goro and Shang Tsung, and saved Earthrealm. Our Spartan-II will land before the second tournament. ****

****Well I hope you enjoy the story.****

****Chapter 1: A Gift from the Gods****

****Disclaimer: I don't own Halo or Mortal Kombat. Halo belongs to 343 Industries and Mortal Kombat belongs to NetherRealm Studios.

*****China, Earthrealm*****

On a bright, warm mid-day, in the Shaolin temple of the Wu Shi Academy's courtyard, several monks cheered and shouted in celebration. Their finest student, Liu Kang, had won the Mortal Kombat tournament, saving Earthrealm from the malevolent Shao Kahn and his forces. Through his heroism, he had restored peace to the troubled land. An orchestra of raucous claps and congratulations boomed throughout the academy for their honored champion.

Despite the joyous time, there was one divine being, who was somewhat troubled by the outcome of Liu Kang's victory. Raiden, the god of thunder, and protector of Earth, was concerned. He sat outside of the temple, at an imposingly tall stone shrine of the Elder Gods, set in the midst of a tranquil bamboo forest. Meditating, the world around him seemed to stand still. The breeze died down through the many trees, and the vibrant green leaves and bamboo stalks stood silent. He needed the peace and quiet, away from the jubilations, to think to himself.

Before the Mortal Kombat tournament began, he had received cryptic visions from his future self, where Shao Kahn became invincible and wiped out all life on Earthrealm. Though he didn't fully understand the prediction, he was able to hear the words, _'He must win.'

—

Raiden looked down and stared at the fractured azure amulet clutched in his palms. He had also noticed that when the future remains unchanged, his amulet would crack. At first, the thunder-god thought, _'He must win' _referred to Liu Kang defeating Shang Tsung at the fighting competition. But he later learned that he was wrong when his amulet cracked even further.

He gently brushed his thumb over the deep scratches the medallion had already taken. The black dragon symbol embedded in the center reflected his gaze, as if it was mocking him for the time puzzle he couldn't solve.

Raiden was of course relieved that Liu Kang had won Mortal Kombat and saved their world, but he was also frustrated at his confusing visions. The thunder-god didn't know who '_he'_ was, what that person had to win at, or even how to prevent the horrible future that was coming.

So now, the immortal being in the straw hat, sought the only entities that could possibly know the answer; the Elder Gods themselves.

Raiden stood up and approached the stone shrine dedicated to the omniscient ones. A sweet and calm gust of wind blew with him, perhaps gesturing that someone above was listening.

"Elder Gods, here my plea! I seek the answers from the visions that

plague me. Who is the one that must win? Who is the one that must prevent a devastating future? I beg of you; share your wisdom with me. Give me a sign."

***In the Realm of the Elder Gods * **

In a land that was so grand, ascension was always promised. A paradise that crafted no wars, but instead held high expectations for its celestial inhabitants. A world that gave immense strength to even its newborns. This was the realm of the Elder Gods.

Where several mountains reached so high, heavenly white clouds misted around them. The weather was always fair among a clear sky, which held a pink hue from the multiple setting suns. Numerous stars and planets sailed so close to the utopia that reaching for them seemed trivial to young daydreamers.

But in the face of the peace and tranquility, six ethereal beings gathered in a civil meeting for a rather pressing matter. They were none other than the Elder Gods themselves.

"Raider, he calls to us once more," The speaker was dark-skinned, so much so that the dry, tan-colored grasses around her hips and the brilliantly colored beads that adorned her body seemed to glow. The whites of her eyes and the pale swirls of paint on her face were a startling contrast to the midnight tone of her skin. She seemed to emit a strange aura, a radiance of power, even as her entire form seemed to waver, as if she were a phantom. She represented an African Shaman.

"It matters not. We must fulfill our sole purpose; to prevent the rebirth of the One-being," the specter of an ancient Japanese samurai, replied. His figure was slim, fitting well in the traditional kimono. The skin was light, which made his thinning black hair stand out.

"We have all foreseen what is to come. We've witnessed all possible outcomes. His arrival is inevitable and our failure is imminent," said the deep voice of the Elder God that appeared similar to a Nordic Viking. His body bulging with muscles behind his fur clothes of a deceased bear. The most flashing of his attire was his blond beard that shined over his large stature.

"Do not speak with such poisonous venom on your tongue. Perhaps there is a chance to thwart our downfall," the soft voice of a goddess spoke. Her emerald eyes stood out from pale skin that matched a fresh blanket of snow. The brunette hair was wrapped in a tight bun, along with two braids trailing down to her thin silk shoulders. Her white toga strapped by a red sash along her waist, which modeled her perfect feminine figure. She represented a young Greek woman.

"What do you mean? Did you blink when the all the futures unfolded before us? What sparks your glimmer of hope and foolishness?" the embodiment of a Native American war chieftain questioned. One could feel intimidated with his red skinned bulky arms folded across his chest. His crimson nose turned up to dignified his bravery and pride. A feather headdress with black horns ran all the way down to his feet. Twin black pig-tailed hair, traveled past the tribal blue paint marks on his face and dangled across his exposed chest. The only real clothing was light brown buffalo skinned pants.

"No, I opened my eyes to gaze further, while the rest of you stared at your own doom. Our own actions may blind even ourselves," the Greek argued.

"Do not attempt to sway us with riddles. We have little patience for false beliefs in these dark times," the Elder God spat who impersonated an Egyptian Queen.

"What if we reached beyond our influence? What if we summoned a warrior from a universe not under our jurisdiction?" the ethereal Greek goddess tried to reason.

"Have you gone mad? We would be unsighted from the future! We could not predict even the simplest of actions! The One-being would surely wipe us out, and we would not foresee it," the Nordic god exclaimed in no haste.

"Silence!" the African shaman intervened, "Let her continue. We are within reason. But why suggest such a bold move? Do you truly believe one individual can change our fate?"

"There are no other options to test upon. Our fates are sealed if we do not act, each of us know this." The Elder Gods glanced at one and another awkwardly. They might have been all-powerful deities, but the One-being was more than capable of bringing them to their knees.

The Greek goddess began again,

"I agree that what I propose is a brash and daring move, letting an unknown bring about our destinies. But it seems to be our last option. Besides it will be very entertaining to watch the oncoming fights, with our predictions clouded."

"Indeed," the samurai grunted, "Have you chosen a champion?"

It was then that the female Greek ethereal smirked on her ghostly lips.

"There is one that I have been watching for quite some time."

***Aboard the UNSC Infinity Command Deck, three months after the Second Battle of Requiem* **

Captain Thomas Lasky stood over the battle net table; it showed the holographic images of three Covenant _CRS_-class light cruisers, orbiting a planet. The most powerful ship in Humanity's arsenal was sent on a rather simple, but crucial mission. They were to intercept a small group of Storm remnants near the former human colony Chi Rho in the Ectanus forty-five system. HIGHCOM had discovered that the Sangheili zealot leading the warships, Zarpa Meham, held the information of Jul Mdama's location.

'And if we find the him, then we find the other half of the Janus Key, and hopefully Dr Halsey as well.'

Lasky frowned at the thought of the aging scientist. When they were on Requiem, he had called her in to help with a certain Forerunner artifact which anchored them to the planet. But then she got captured

by Promethean Knights right before his very eyes, during their boarding incident.

Admiral Osman quickly learned about her abduction and gave the drastic order for Commander Palmer to assassinate her. He hated the thought of having to kill the civilian when she needed help; they were soldiers after all, not hitman. So he tried to prevent her execution when he sent fire team Majestic to grab her, before Palmer could arrive. Yet in the end, they ultimately failed and Dr Halsey had been taken by Jul Mdama.

_'We lost a huge asset, and the other half of the Janus Key to those Split-lips. And it was all my fault.' _

To help his ease mind, he replayed the strategic plan to ambush the Covies several times over in his head. It was a fairly straightforward operation. They were to exit out of slipspace, destroy the two escort ships around the command cruiser and disable its engines. During the attack, a small Spartan boarding team would be sent in to download the vital information, and get out with minimum casualties. They would then have the official confirmation to finish off the remaining _CRS-_light cruiser. Finally they would report back to Lord Hood of their findings.

Yes, it would indeed be a walk in a park for the mightiest ship in the UNSC's fleet, along with the nearly unstoppable Spartan super soldiers. He was also reassured and worried that an old friend of his had volunteered for the mission.

A yellow avatar, tall and rough, with the appearance of an American World War II pilot, popped up next to Thomas Lasky with a brief salute.

"We are nearing the small Covenant fleet location, Captain. A stagger line, pretty standard positioning really. The Infinity should be clear of slipspace in a few minutes."

"Thanks, Roland."

Instead of flashing away to carry on with other tasks of the ship, Roland stood there as if he was thinking. The hologram lost its respectful stance, and began to pace the holopad on the corner of the desktop. He stopped and faced the captain, arms crossed, with his face contorted into an expression of unease. Being the bold type of smart A.I, he spoke what was on his mind,

"Sir, if I may? I do see a few minor flaws with our objective."

"Go ahead."

"For starters, don't you think it is a bit of overkill to send the Infinity to take out three little light cruisers?"

The Captain of said ship, couldn't hold back the chuckle. The A.I. was very much right that sending the largest ship in human's history was a bit much. But from what he and nearly every other veteran of the Human-Covenant war learned; nothing was overkill, especially when it concerned the Forerunners.

"Duly noted. What's the next issue?"

"Is this mission too personal for Sierra-117? There's a slight chance that he could find out about Dr Halsey."

Thomas paused and held his breath for a moment, his distress for his old friend resurfaced. It was the one minor detail that concerned him about the whole mission; what if Master Chief found out about Dr Halsey? Serin Osman made it crystal clear that the super soldier and the scientist should never contact one another. He assumed that the Spartans held a grudge against the doctor from practically taking their entire lives away. His hunch was reinforced when Halsey slapped him across the face when she realized that they were hiding information that listed Chief was alive. But he did think it was odd that she would hit him in the first place.

'_If she was willing to smack me, I wonder what a raging Spartan would do?' _a cold shiver slithered down his spine at the destructive thought.

"Just let me worry about that, Roland. Is the boarding team ready?"

"Spartans Parker and Kent are getting prepped in the armory. Commander Palmer is currently making her way to the bird as we speak," the A.I. informed.

"Lasky arched an eyebrow. He was curious as to why there was no mention of the man they were only just talking about."

"What about the Master Chief?"

"He's been waiting in the Pelican for the past twenty minutes."

***Main Hangar Bay of the UNSC Infinity* **

In the large hangar bay of Humanity's finest warship, several pilots and personnel scrambled around like bees in a hive. Bright strobe lights flashed and officers shouted, directing everyone to their specific duty. Fuel lines were attached to the underbelly of the jets, while routine system checks ran in their cockpit. They wanted every single F-41 Broadsword well supplied for the upcoming dogfight.

But among all the ruckus and commotion, one lone, large, armored figure remained frozen in the shadows. Hunched over in the cargo bay seats of a Pelican gunship was Master Chief Petty Officer John-117. While his body didn't move an inch, his mind ran with a thousand thoughts, as he stared endlessly at the data matrix in the palm of his hand. What once went to the back of his helmet, now belonged around his neck, next to his dog tags. That way it was close to him at all times, by his heart and under his armor, like how _'she'_ was.

"I won't recover from Rampancy, Chief."

Cortana's thoughts drifted to her once again. It had been nine months since her death. Since she'd sacrificed herself to save him to save Humanity from the Didact and his Composer. He remembered the tremble in her voice and his as she'd said goodbye to him, disappearing

forever. He could never forget the sadness in her digital eyes. Even as it crossed his mind, the Spartan felt an ache, a tightness in his chest and a thickness in his throat.

"Don't make a girl a promise... if you know you can't keep it..."

The Spartan-II was no stranger to death, he had witnessed countless amount of casualties throughout his entire life. And yet, as used to death as he was, it never became any easier. He could feel the pain welling up inside him again, despite his best efforts to squash it.

"Promise me you'll find out which one of us is the machine."

From the day Dr Halsey gave the A.I to him, Cortana had done so much for him. She saved his life on numerous occasions, stopped him from inadvertently wiping out all life in the galaxy with Installation-04, eradicated the Flood on the Ark and she, not him, had bested the Didact.

"It worked, you did it! Just like you always do..."

The renegade Forerunner was on the verge of ending his life, the Spartan rendered helpless by his telekinetic field, but she had come to his defense one final time. She'd bought their victory with her life. And would anyone even know? Most of what had occurred on the Didact's vessel was still strictly classified. And even the bits that had been declassified would the history books ever truly capture how much Cortana had done for all of the human race?

"I'm not coming with you this time...most of me is down there. I held only enough back to get you off the ship."

Without her, he was not whole. He was an empty man in a shell. He felt as if he'd left a piece of himself behind on the Didact's vessel, as if someone had ripped a part of him out, and left a void where it used to be.

"We were supposed to take care of each other... and we did!"

He narrowed his gaze behind the visor of his helmet. He could not allow those thoughts to weigh him down, to drag him into the abyss of despair and wallow in his self-pity. Cortana wouldn't have wanted that. He was still Humanity's sword and shield; a Spartan-II. That was how he would honor her legacy. That was what he'd kept telling himself all these months. And yet the pain was still there. It never dulled nor healed, it was his constant reminder of what he was missing.

"Welcome home, John."

Once Chief arrived back on Earth, the UNSC was gracious enough to offer him some leisure time for his services. Of course he had to go through some questioning on his whereabouts after the war. Ultimately, he denied the recreational opportunity. Instead he busied himself by partaking in any mission available. He was a soldier, and fighting was the only thing he knew.

He secured outer colonies and repelled any Storm Covenant or

remaining Loyalist that attacked them. However, nothing felt the same as during the war. It was as if he had woken up in an entirely new era.

Humanity was no longer losing to the former mighty Covenant Empire. They were now crushing any remnant forces that stood in their way with relative ease. The UNSC technology had improved vastly over the short amount of years, and the Infinity was the epitome of it all. Shields strong enough to plow through nearly any vessel and enough firepower to take on an entire fleet on its own.

New weapons and vehicles slaughtered their way through the Storm's ranks, making mince meat out of every foe. Colonies and worlds were being reconstructed after their glassing, along with searching new habitable planets. Ships were sent on excavations to locate and research whatever Forerunner artifacts were left out there in the vast galaxy.

Even the Spartans had their own branch in the military.

The Master Chief was able to read up on the S-IV project. The augmentations that had crippled half his brothers and sisters were a thing of the past, replaced by newer and safer methods. The newest super soldiers didn't have the ceramic coated bones or reflexes as fast as his 'kind,' but that was traded for anyone to be able to participate in the program rather than having a specific genetic code.

The Gen-II Mjolnir armor was also much different from his generation set. Streamlined edges, pronounced power pack design, as well as being much cheaper too. The new models were mass-produced by factories rather than Dr Halsey herself. While his armor cost the amount of a starship, the Spartan-IV's only equaled to a fully armed Scorpion tank or able to equip an entire ODST platoon.

In a way, the Spartan-IV's were almost alien to him and the rest of his family. They weren't like himself, Kelly, Linda, or Fred. They weren't raised up from small children, nor 'indoctrinated.' And none of them had the decades of active combat experience that he and his remaining brethren had. They were taken from high scoring and quality performing Marine, Army, ODST, and Naval personnel. Some were veterans, while others had been recruited straight out of basic training. They were ordinary individuals given extraordinary abilities and weaponry. Nothing more, nothing less. A part of him wondered if that was one reason why they didn't seem as heavily augmented as the S-II's; because the Model-IV's weren't "programmed" with absolute loyalty to the UNSC. If that was the case, it made another anomaly that he and his team had noticed, all the more stark.

At one point, something did cross his mind. If there were IVs, where were the IIIs? He certainly didn't recall ever meeting one of them during the war. Maybe it was a washed out program?

He was hoping to see Dr Halsey, so she could fill him in on what he has missed the past few years. For reasons he didn't know, his requests to see her were denied. He wanted to inform her about Cortana, and maybe ask her if there was ever a chance to save his closest friend. He also wanted to know if his adopted mother, Halsey herself, was safe and sound.

"Ready for the mission, Chief?" a female, but authoritative voice called out.

Bringing him out of his thoughts, Master Chief immediately clutched his hand, and turned his head. No one didn't need to see him in his moment of weakness, especially not her.

The Commander of the Spartan-IV contingent, Sarah Palmer stepped into the Pelican's loading ramp. She wore her usual snow-white Scout variant armor, with her helmet off and tucked under her right arm. Two M6H magnums were attached to her thighs, weapons she seemed to prefer, along with a M395 DMR slung on her back. She might have been suited up for war, but a small smile on her pursed lips, suggested otherwise.

John-117 had come to associate a certain amount of warmth and joviality under her facial expressions. Normally, she was cold, sarcastic, and strict with the other super soldiers, just like how a superior officer was supposed to behave. But with him, she was... different. She was somewhat kind in her own fashion and seemed to almost put effort to make him feel apart of the crew.

For the past few months, she had tried to socialize with him on a level no else had ever attempted. Various times, she'd ask him to workout with her in the gym, eat with her in the cafeteria, and even to train with her in the War Games with the other IVs. He denied all those requests save a few War Games in an attempt to help better the newest models. Still such human acts pointed out that she acted like an apparent friend.

But it did beg the question; why would she want to be companions with him? Was it because they shared the same title of Spartan? Was it out of admiration when people referred to him as a hero? Or was it because she knew that he lost someone dear to him? Whatever it might have been, he truly couldn't fathom it. But he knew he didn't need her pity. He would just adapt and survive, move on to the next fight, like how he always done.

His gaze fell to the empty floor.

'_Just like a machine,'_ the mechanical thoughts cranked in his head.

Palmer frowned when Chief remained silent as a statue, she knew he had to be grieving still. Her brown eyes fell upon his hand that held Cortana's data chip. She didn't fully understand the relationship between the A.I. and the one who saved all of humanity.

The Master Chief's partner was nearly as legendary as the Spartan himself. It was common knowledge in the military that the A.I. had been able to navigate through Forerunner systems with the ease of using a search engine, putting every egghead to shame. Anyone could see how she was so human-like in attitude and behavior; more than one person had mentioned the unnerving originality and authentic tone of voice in her jokes and her snark. Marines had occasionally whistled and drooled at the perfect, holographic nude avatar, a form which other women were envious of. Considering the differences in personality between the Chief and Cortana, it was a mystery how they managed to get along so well.

Sarah recalled the tense conflict between the former Captain Del Rio and the Master Chief. At first, the two had remained manageable with the other, though Del Rio had tried his trademark tendency to force his authority on the lower ranking officer. The ultimate event for their power struggle occurred when Cortana's rampancy revealed itself and unleashed an electromagnetic pulse, which temporarily disrupted the Infinity's bridge controls. Del Rio had attempted to bully him into surrendering his companion, but surprisingly John-117 had countered with a bold dismissal of a direct order from a superior officer. Spartans were trained to follow UNSC law to the letter; Chief's defiance had shocked all of them. She had passed it off as the Chief doing what he thought would defeat the Didact, before it reached Earth. But perhaps there was something more sentimental?

Commander Palmer remembered the stories of his suicide run into the Flood-controlled High Charity. The initial mission goal had been to retrieve the Index from a shipboard A.I, and initiate the in-construction Halo ring above the Ark. He indeed completed the mission like always, it was just he went further and brought Cortana back with him. For the longest time, Sarah had been baffled and frustrated with how the facts didn't add up. How the Chief, a living legend and humanity's single symbol of hope, had risked everything to save a replaceable computer program.

She still didn't fully understand, especially not now.

Sarah Palmer glanced over her shoulder to see if anyone was around. She was satisfied to see that all the personnel were far too busy with the broadswords to pay them any heed. She sat down next to the famed 117, with her helmet resting on her lap. She took a deep breath, and quickly exhaled to release the speech she promptly thought up in a that second;

"Chief, I know I can't truly understand what you're going through. But right now, I need you fully focused on the mission, so we can get in and get out all in one piece."

The super soldier turned his head towards her, acknowledging her words and giving her a steely amber stare.

She smiled a bit, partially aware that she was getting through that thick armor. It was actually a bit of a surprise since her words weren't all heart-felt or gooey, but brief and to the point. Well the Master Chief wasn't exactly known for his talking either, so she assumed that was what he was used to. Once she felt enough confidence was built up, she performed the next big leap; by placing a comforting hand on his clenched fist.

"Maybe once we're debriefed, me and you can talk about it over some coffee," Sarah said genuinely with a small smile that replaced the frown on her pursed lips.

For a moment there was no response from the Master Chief, and Sarah had to wonder whether she had perhaps gone too far. Those thoughts were banished from her mind, however, when there was a slight movement of the Chief's head; he had nodded, and with that her heart-felt strangely lighter.

Just as Sarah was shaping the words 'It's a deal then', a young male voice called out from behind them:

"Man, I can't wait until we finish this mission."

Sarah's eyes instantly shot open in shock, losing the emotional gaze with the stern Master Chief. Both Spartans were completely startled that someone was close by and could possibly see them.

With lightning fast reaction speed, Commander Palmer let go of Chief's hand and grabbed her helmet on her lap. She briskly locked in the protective gear on her head, and looked to the oncoming visitor. She did her absolute best to conceal the nervousness at being seen, her clamped fist nearly shaking.

If anyone was going to accuse her of anything... well they had another thing coming.

Meanwhile, John-117 quickly, but with a smooth fluid grace, tucked the data chip behind his chest plate, where it would be safe from any harm. He then reached to his side and held the MA5D assault rifle in his arms like a true military commando. He leaned back a bit, to where the magnetically attached Spartan Laser hit the seat. He remained stoic and cool, as if nothing ever happened.

He saw who the voice belonged to, as two male Spartan-IVs came into view at the back of the Pelican. Both of them were fully armored in the Recruit version of the Gen-II, which most of them seemed to wear.

"I finally get to choose a specialization once we're through. I think I'll go with Wetwork for stealth. What about you Parker?"

"I've decided on Rogue, I do better on my own."

The Master Chief could vaguely guess that the two IVs, might had been the same ones that accompanied him with Thomas Lasky on the Mammoth. It was when they had to take out the anti-air forces on Requiem, and where he first encountered the Librarian.

"Don't you think it's kind of weird that they chose us to help the Master Chief and Commander Palmer?"

"Well Kent, they need the best so they got' em," the one known as Parker said with a light chuckle.

"Are you referring to us or Chief and Palmer?" Kent asked.

"Who do you think?"

"Spartans, sound off!" the Commander of the IVs barked, while standing up. Sarah's familiar imperious demeanor had returned, demanding full respect and attention.

At the ramp of the 'bird', both of them straighten up and saluted to the appointed leader.

"Spartans Parker and Kent, reporting for duty, ma'am!" Parker replied in the correct martial fashion, ditching his casual mood from a moment ago.

She glanced between the two, giving them an icy stare behind her cerulean blue visor, until finally;

"At ease."

The duo of super soldiers released a powerful exhale, losing their dignified posture, and dropping into the seats like a heavy sack of potatoes.

Though he wouldn't say it out loud, but John-117 did silently admit that Commander Palmer had a good way of controlling those under her.

"Alright boys," she began as she held onto the railing above her, "We got a simple grab and go mission today. We're to board the Covie ship and blast our way to the bridge. Once there, we must download vital information on the possible location of the head Split-lip honcho; Jul Mdama. Then we stroll out of there and let the Infinity blow the cruiser to kingdom come. We will be sprinting through this operation, so if you fall behind, you better work your ass off to catch back up,"

She faced the older generation of the team.

"Master Chief, you'll be taking point."

He simply nodded his head in obligation, which she returned in kind.

"Parker, you and me will be providing cover fire for Chief. He's got our front, so we need to watch his back." Palmer declared.

The young male Spartan-IV reached over his shoulder and pulled out his SAW.

"Yes, ma'am!"

Sarah then turned to the final super soldier.

"Kent, you are the demolition man. Anything big standing in our way, it's your job to make them wish they weren't,"

"It'll be my solemnly pleasure, ma'am." he replied, slapping a sticky detonator to his thigh and a rail gun in his arms.

Finally Commander Palmer opened her comm link and spoke,

"Roland, tell Captain Lasky that we're green for go,"

***Back on the bridge* **

Captain Thomas Lasky once again, stood over the battle net table in the middle of the bridge. He continued to thoroughly examine the three holographic versions of the Covenant CRS light cruisers that they would soon be engaging, along with a squadron of Seraph fighters guarding them.

Like before, Roland's avatar popped up on the table, hands folded behind his back.

"Exiting slipspace in one minute, sir. The MACs are warmed up, all broadswords are prepped, and the Spartan team is geared up. On your word, Captain," the resident A.I. of the Infinity informed.

"Let's get this show on the road."

"Attention all hands. We are exiting slipspace jump," Roland called out through the intercom inside the mighty warship.

There was no warning save for the words of the AI, as a large, swirling vortex tore open directly in front of the Infinity. In little more than an instant the vessel was swallowed by the gaping hole in space, and deposited out the other side. It was there they saw their intended targets. Three _CRS-_class light cruisers orbited the scarred burnt remains of the UNSC colony world of Chi Rho. Alongside the Storm Covenant crafts were twenty Seraphs, already zooming towards the Infinity, hell-bent on wiping out the humans.

"Captain, we've got enemy Seraphs twelve o'clock," Lieutenant Phillips quickly reported from his station.

The automated point defense turrets on the Infinity's hulls already sprung to life, firing endlessly to swat out any nearby alien starfighters.

"Sir." Roland called out, "The enemy is in range and we have a positive lock on the fleet."

"The word is given. Fire the first MAC!" Captain Thomas Lasky barked.

"Aye, aye, sir!" the A.I. obeyed with a swift salute.

One of the four Magnetic Accelerator Cannons was already aimed at the cruiser on the right in the trio of the triangle formation. The first slug went off in what could only imagine be a deafening boom, if there was air in space. Within the blink of an eye, it found its destination.

The tungsten round slammed into the first Covenant ship. Instantly the shields were depleted and large portions of their hulls gutted by the devastating MAC projectile. In the next second, the light cruiser exploded in a blinding purple light of plasma. The broken and shattered remains shot across space, transforming into large clouds of debris.

Inside the bridge of the Infinity, its crew cheered and applauded in a small glamorous victory at their first kill, with more soon to follow.

"Nice job everyone, Captain Lasky congratulated, "Now let's get the next cruiser in our sights. Launch our fighters. I want the pilots scrambled to hold off those seraphs. Our Spartans will need a clear runway."

Twenty-five designated broadswords flew out of the hangar bay to greet the seraphs for a gruesome dogfight. All of them gathered in tactical formation, and met with their enemy head on. Both factions

of fighters seemingly danced with each other in the etiquette of battle in the endless depths of open space. Most broadswords unleashed their missiles that sought the wisping seraphs. Some Sangheili pilots were talented enough to get away with lucky executed spins and twirls, while others pranced to an empty cold grave. The humans knew that in due time, they would win the tango with their superior numbers and skills.

But at the current time, the main conflict was the ship-to-ship combat.

"Sir, the readings on the left cruiser have spiked! They're firing their Energy Projector!" Lieutenant Phillips called out from his computer on the bridge.

A lance of sapphire blue light crossed the distance between the cruiser and the Infinity in an instant. The hexagonal energy shields of the human warship flared up as the directed energy beam splashed across the barrier. It was like a drop of water against a rock; the advanced shielding aboard the Infinity was able to repel the beam with ease.

"Shields still holding at ninety-five percent, Captain Lasky," Roland said, his tone and manner as casual as if he were reporting the week's weather forecast.

"Return fire. Shoot the next MAC." Thomas Lasky on the other hand, still had the carefully controlled tone of a man giving orders, which he most definitely was.

The MAC round catapulted through space and railed into the next light cruiser. The slug tore through the middle of bulbous body, ripping through its spine. The mass of purple armor, tried to resist for a millisecond before violently loosing. The ship cracked in half down the center and ignited in a huge detonation, a fantastic display of raw kinetic energy. The broken remains began to drift away from each other and burn up in Chi Rho's atmosphere.

"Direct hit, sir, the ship is down. Our kill count is two," Roland notified with a holographic grin.

"Excellent work. Aim for the left-wing on the final cruiser. We want to take out its shields, not destroy it."

For a third time, the super weapon went off with a silent boom and rocketed to its remaining foe. The MAC round immediately penetrated the energy shields, just like the others before it. The projectile carved right through the port side of the vessel, shearing off its curved 'appendage'. From the saturation attack, a powerful push of inertia flung the damaged cruiser in a ninety-degree angle, displaying it's now bared engines.

Thomas Lasky's eyes flashed wide open for merely a moment at the destructive show. Still he retained his professional calmed posture with his hands folded behind his back, and gave the next order.

"Target those engines and any plasma turrets, then launch Archer missile pods A and B."

A duo of cases shot out from the Infinity, and propelled at the husk of a ship. Within range, the two pods dispersed giving birth to forty-eight missiles screaming towards the lone Covenant warship. The concentrated strike rained down on the exposed engines and turrets, detonating the warheads.

The severely crippled CRS-light cruiser merely floated in the darkness of space, dead in the water. Grey smoke withered from their heavily damaged sections that now resembled craters. Fragments of the pulse laser and plasma turrets skimmed across the surface of the wreckage. Unfortunate Storm Sangheili, Kig-ar, and Unggoy bodies that were sucked out from the ship, drifted in a frozen state next to the ruins. Such chaos only brought the UNSC one step closer to victory.

Captain Lasky smiled grimly at the success, while the crew clapped their hands together mixed with shouts in glory. He then looked at the resident A.I.

"Roland, I'd say that cruiser is in perfect condition for boarding. How are our fighters doing?"

"They are mopping up the rest of the seraphs as we speak, Captain. Overall the mission went even better than I calculated. I think I was right on the overkill though."

"Jobs not over yet. Send out the Spartans."

"Aye aye, sir. Passing the message along to Commander Palmer."

***Main Hangar Bay of the UNSC Infinity* **

"Initiating pre-flight diagnostics. Forward Autocannon: Check. Lateral Rail Turrets: Check." The female pilot, Rebekah, radioed in the comm., "Main Thrusters: Check. Auxiliary Boosters: Check. All right keying engines... now."

The Pelican's engines hummed to life causing the dropship to hover above the ground. There was a hiss as the ramp retracted and the rear cargo door closed, sealing the super soldiers protectively inside. Rebekah craned her neck over her seat to check on her passengers. When Commander Palmer nodded her head for the go-to sign, the pilot informed the bridge of the statistics.

"This is Echo-093, my bird is chirping and the kids in back are ready to play."

"Copy that Echo, you are good to go. It should be some smooth flying today," a male voice answered.

"Roger, command."

The gunship gently flew out of the hangar and into the endless amount of space. Once it was a safe distance away from the hangar, the thrusters fired at full burn, pushing them forward and farther from the Infinity.

"We are deployed and inbound to the Covenant cruiser."

The human aircraft raced across the battlefield that was dominated by their own triumphant species. The entire layout was filled with the weightless detritus of the defeated Storm.

They got a decent view at the carnage that the broadswords brought as they swarmed the few remaining seraphs like raging wasps. The last of the alien starfighters were brutally hunted down in the short lived dogfight. The Storm Sangheili pilots were hopelessly outgunned and outmatched, reducing them into dissipating fireballs. One could almost feel pity for the Elites from their futile actions... almost. To others it was a form of justice from when their genocidal campaign glassed the young UNSC colony of Chi Rho during the war.

Past that lied a massive graveyard of fresh Covenant ship debris. It seemed nearly impossible to believe that a small fleet was alive let alone active there not too long ago. Now large pieces of floating scrap littered the area, forcing the Pelican to lazily maneuver around them.

Behind the heaps of junk, awaited their destination; the heavily damaged CRS-light cruiser flagship.

The pilot let out a low whistle in astonishment, admiring how the enemy vessel was missing an entire wing section. A valuable piece of art drawn from the thunderous MAC round.

"Wow, the Infinity sure did a number on her."

She steered the Pelican closer to the impaired warship's hangar, but suddenly stopped in her tracks. Rebekah let out an amused chuckle when she saw that a good-sized platoon of five Elites, eight Grunts, and six Jackals were bunkered down on the other side of the hangar shield.

It was pretty impressive that they were able to cram themselves in such a tight room. The hangar being almost identical to a CCS-class battlecruiser's, just significantly smaller. It was simply two-tiered, connected by pillar-like platforms, with little space between the floors and ceilings of each level. The only thing separating them from outside was a square plasma magnetic containment field that retained the atmosphere.

"Bastards must have known that we were coming," she mumbled under her breath.

"What's the hold up, pilot?" Commander Palmer called from the back of the dropship. She was impatient, the adrenalin already beginning to course through her body, ready for the battles to come.

"We've got some Covies holding the line in the landing zone. I count nineteen. Don't worry, I'll take care of them," she reassured in confidence.

Rebekah nudged the controls that carefully flew them inside, past the barrier. The Covenant immediately responded by unleashing a barrage of small arms fire. The never-ending shower of colorful plasma sprinkled over the troop carrier, but left nothing worse than black scorched marks on it.

"You'll need something stronger than those pea-shooters! Too bad, I'm

the only one with the big guns!" the pilot mocked through the intercom with a toothy grin, stretching from ear to ear.

The Pelican's nose mounted auto cannon rotated and pointed in their direction, emitting a familiar hum signifying that it was about to release a hail of seventy millimeter rounds.

A Storm Sangheili Warrior bravely stood up and discharged its full concussion rifle. Four explosive bolts soared and dropped on the UNSC gunship, but only tattooed a few dark smudges on the bird.

"My turn squid-head!" Rebekah shouted, while she eagerly held her thumb over the red firing button.

Bright yellow bullets razed the ground where the golden armored alien had stood. Its personal energy shield quickly collapsed under the heavy firepower and tore through the rough skin like butter. The Elite cried out in immense pain, but it was drowned out by the blazing sounds of gunfire. After a very brief second, the appointed defensive, leader's corpse fell to the ground, its thick purple blood staining the hangar floor.

When the others had seen that their most seasoned kin had died by the humans, all of them reacted on their various basic instinct. The four surviving Sangheili minors jumped up and roared ferociously like animals. They charged at the transport, while continuously pelting it with streaking, blue plasma from their storm rifles. Some of them spoke in their native tongue with the words 'heretic' and 'honor' repeated.

The Pelican's turret directed itself at the oncoming Elites, and released its deadly payload. The four remnants were assaulted by the brutal force of lead rounds pounding against their bodies, their shields destroyed quicker than their veteran counterpart. The drastic force knocked them off their hooves and sent them tumbling.

"I've got plenty more where that came from, bitches!" the pilot's voice rising in utter excitement, reveling in the carnage.

Each Kig-Yar started to back away into different corners in the wide room. Those with shield gauntlets, threw them up, trying to cover their entire skinny form. The snipers dashed from cover to cover, looking for a good spot to stay alive. All of them secretly knew that they would be the next to go on the female's hit list. Their kind was always targeted once the split-lips were killed. Like every pirate, the Jackals cared for no one but themselves.

Without anyone to lead them, the Unggoy scrambled all around. Stubby legs ran as fast as they could carry them, with scaly arms flailing in the air. The Grunts tried to scatter, but there was nowhere to flee. Taking them out would be like shooting ducks at a carnival.

Inside the Pelican, Rebekah looked back at the Spartans.

"Go on ahead, I'll handle the rest of these freaks."

The rear cargo bay door opened with a loud hiss, but the gunship continued to hover in the air.

The Master Chief was the first to jump out, initially fulfilling the role as the front man. He landed with a loud thud, and immediately drew his assault rifle with an almost unnatural grace. There were still plenty of hostiles alive, but it seemed they were getting mowed down by the dropship's auto-cannon.

"Don't waste your ammo on them," Commander Palmer instructed as she touched down next to him, "The pilot has us covered. We need to get to the bridge, and download the information."

Kent followed suit, railgun unholstered and scanning the area. Parker came out last, armed with the SAW.

"Let's get moving, Spartans!" Sarah ordered after she grabbed both of her magnums from her sides.

The team broke out in a dead sprint, with John-117 in lead. Commander Palmer dashed along Chief's left side, while Parker trailed on the right, and Kent shadowed in the back. They ran through the door and into the network of hallways. The super soldiers were a zipping blur as they rocketed down the empty corridors, though the model II had to considerably slow down to keep at pace with the IVs.

With such amazing tilting speeds, they were able to pass through several halls in no time.

During the hasty scurry, the group couldn't help but notice how the inner parts of the cruiser were in complete disarray. The walls of purple metal casing were dented and ripped apart, revealing the sparking jagged wires underneath. Multiple Covenant carcasses laid broken and battered, throughout the walkways from being thrown around. They must have died after the Infinity's devastating MAC round spun the entire ship. It was a wonder why even send in the armored behemoths if they hardly met any resistance at all?

Still keeping ever vigilant, they had their firearms prepared for any surprise attacks to pop out.

"After the next hall is the bridge, boys. We're almost done," Sarah Palmer informed, while they raced ahead.

"Aw man, really? Where are all the Covies? They're making this too easy. I almost wish for a Hunter right now!" Kent complained, eager to kill another foe from the lack of action.

No sooner had the words left his mouth that a door not too far ahead began to open. It was a perfect example of Murphy's Law when from within the doorway two huge, hulking figures shambled into the hallway. Kent had gotten his wish; the giants were obviously a pair of Mgalekgolo, given away by their sheer size and the blue tint to their armor.

The team skidded to a sudden stop, when the Storm juggernauts blocked their path. One of them held out its assault cannon, while a mass of green energy gathered around it.

"You just had to say something, didn't you?!" Parker cursed at his friend.

"Get down!" Master Chief cried out.

In the nick of time, the Spartans dove to the ground, just when an oversized glob of green gel soared over them. The bolt from the Hunter's assault cannon slammed into the door behind the super soldiers, vaporizing it in a brilliant explosion. The plasma ate away at the entry, like hungry termites on wood. They quickly got back on their feet, ready for a fight.

"Spread out! Chief, me and you got one." Sarah then pointed at the Spartan IVs, "You two got the other. Take them down!"

The squad separated into duets, going after their own walking tank.

John hefted out the Spartan Laser over his shoulder and looked at Palmer.

"Can you distract it?" he asked, while he held down the trigger, emitting an audible whine.

It was very easy for her to connect the dots on his plan with the heavy weapon. All he needed was a little bit of time.

"You got it," she replied.

Sarah turned and fired four shots from her dual magnums. The Hunter responded in kind by raising its monstrous, metal shield arm, where the bullets harmlessly bounced off.

The Commander sneered a bit at her foolish tactic. Yes, she could distract the thing by shooting at it, but it would certainly be waste of ammo. It was then that, an idea concocted in her head and she darted at the Mgalekgolo. It mirrored her actions, charging towards her with incredible stomps that could steamroll anything in its way.

Suddenly, everything around her started to slow down as she entered the infamous Spartan time. Now she saw the rampaging beast was lumbering at a snail's pace.

Within closing distance, the giant raised its enormous shield arm, wanting to smash the female demon in a single mighty swing.

At the last second, Commander Palmer shuffled to the side, just when the worm beast brought down the unknown alloy. She then leapt on the lowered shield and used her built up momentum to vault over the colossal alien. In mid-jump, she brought her handguns to bear and unleashed eight rounds that pierced into the Hunter's exposed back.

The Covenant titan howled in agony with its deep, rough, rumbled voice. It stepped back a bit due to its wounds, but it was there that it noticed a red targeting laser painted on its chest. The Hunter followed the bright line and saw where it came from. In a moment of desperation, it torpedoed ahead.

With impressive velocity, the Mgalekgolo slapped the Spartan Laser out of Master Chief's hands. The battery weapon slid across the floor, the glaring red light dying out. Pressing the heat on the commando, it lashed at Chief with another vertical swing from its

arm, but he nimbly ducked.

The super soldier tucked and rolled behind the Storm's infantry heavy unit. He took out his assault rifle from the magnetic clamps on his back, and let loose the firepower on the colony of worms. The bullets blasted into the bare back, orange blood splattering all over the ground. When his gun clicked dry, Chief promptly reloaded with a fresh clip.

The Hunter wailed in a low-pitched scream, and dropped to an armored knee. It was able to catch itself by holding steady on its cannon arm. The fearsome creature was too wounded to finish its fight.

Seeing the perfect opportunity for a final strike, Master Chief pounced on its back and took a hold of its spikes. With the automatic gun in one hand, he pressed the barrel to the withering worms and held the trigger down. The full thirty-two magazine went into the loyalist, ripping the goliath's innards to shreds. The giant toppled to the ground like a towering skyscraper.

Sierra-117 stepped back from his recent kill, and slapped in fresh clip for his rifle with fluid motion. Next he went over and picked up the Spartan Laser. With a quick check, he saw that the durable cannon was still in prime condition for battle. He holstered it, but he could sense that Commander Palmer was walking up behind him.

"Nice job, Chief," Sarah complimented, which she rarely threw out on operations. "Now let's see if the other two need help."

Without warning, Kent flew through the air and landed at their boots.

"Ow..." he groaned from the ground.

The Spartans looked up to see Parker was narrowly avoiding a boxing match with the remaining Hunter. They indistinctly raised their guns to pepper the beast, but a held up gauntlet stopped them.

"Hang on," Kent reassured, while steadily getting back up, "We got this."

The male IV reached to his thigh, and withdrew his sticky detonator. He targeted the rocket pistol at the Mgalekgolo, and fired.

****CLUNK!****

The explosive muzzle propelled and latched on the juggernaut's knee like a spit wad.

A radar screen popped up on the hilt of the single shot pistol, while the adhesive grenade beeped and flashed a red light on the loyalist.

"You're getting sloppy," Palmer razzed, noticing where the DMG landed.

She would've rested her hands on her hips to display her smug, but given the circumstance, she preferred to keep her sidearms

out.

"Wait for it," he responded anxiously.

Kent reached over and pulled out his railgun. He carefully aimed at the flickering mine with a keen eye. The accelerator lit up in a brilliant blue light for a brief moment, and then shot with mind numbing speed.

****BOOM!****

A sizable detonation over encumbered the hulking form, causing it to tumble to the floor with a loud thud. A powerful chain-reaction from two UNSC grade explosives.

"There's your opening, Parker! Take it!" Kent shouted out.

Said super soldier quickly ran over to the head of the smoking, downed Hunter. He pressed his SAW to its uncovered neck and released the light machine gun's full burst. Orange blood spewed all over the recruit's armor in a rather messy fashion. The titanic creature went limp, never to rise again.

"Yeah, we are getting pretty sloppy," Kent remarked to his superior officer in dry humor.

She merely shrugged off the comment.

John silently admitted, that though the IVs were naïve and couldn't stack up to his generation, they could be creative when they wanted to be. Still they had a mission to focus on and very well intended to complete it.

The group wasted no time over the dead Hunters and continued on to their destination. They rushed past doorway after doorway, glancing through them as they passed, wary of any more enemies that may have been lurking. Their caution was in vain, however, as no more appeared, and in no time they had reached the final door. With their guns cocked and at the ready, the door split and slid open, revealing what hid behind it; the bridge.

It was indistinguishable from the CCS versions such as the _Truth and Reconciliation _that blew up on Installation-04. There was a raised platform in the center of the spacious room, ringed with holographic controls that ruled the light cruiser. The controls were blaring a radiant red, obviously a warning system from the severe damage the vessel had taken. And like every Covenant ship, there was a Shipmaster.

The Storm Sangheili Zealot, Zarpa Meham stationed himself at the controls, desperately trying to keep his warship maintained. His four digit hands were rapidly pressing the keys against shimmering images, much like a timed child putting together a new puzzle. When he heard the melodic ding of the entry opening, he momentarily paused to see who disturbed him during his stressful troubles.

At the sight of his armored assassins, he reared back and roared savagely in a blind fury. Of course the humans would send '_them_' to eliminate him, but he would not cower in the face of death. With the flick of his wrist, he ignited his energy sword and pointed the dual

tips of the plasma blade in the direction of the intruders.

"DEMONS! ALL OF YOU SHALL DIE BY MY BLADE!" the zealot bellowed.

The super soldiers kept their guns aimed at him, expecting the shipmaster to come charging at them like every energy sword wielding Elite. But much to their dismay, he did not. Alternatively, Zarpa Meham, pulled out a plasma grenade and tossed it towards them.

The small, but deadly ball of blue fire stuck to the ground in front of the Spartans. It hissed like a viper ready to strike.

"Move!" Master Chief cried out on an impulse.

Everyone quickly leapt to the side, just when the Covenant grenade exploded.

"He said he wants to kill us with his sword, but instead he throws a grenade! What the hell...Hey, where did he go?" Kent asked when the zealot seemingly vanished from thin air.

They looked around to see where he had gone, but the Sangheili was nowhere in sight.

"Eyes up! He must be using active camouflage. Check your motion trackers and watch for any distortions nearby," Commander Palmer advised.

They carefully scanned the room with an itchy trigger fingers, ready to pull it on a moment's notice. The air was filled with an eerie silence; the only sound being heard was the constant beeping from the terminals. If a pin were to fall they would hear it, and most likely shoot it.

Most people knew that the elites were well adept in using their stealth technology. With controlled breathing, hushed footsteps, and caused them to be practically invisible to the naked eye, they could even sneak up on a ninja. They were the perfect infiltrators to ambush any of their enemies.

The UNSC had taught their troops what to expect when engaging a cloaked Covie, but the one with greatest experience in the group was the Master Chief himself. Years of fighting the Covenant also meant that more than once he had to deal with their special operation troopers.

Several times, he had fought them when they all wanted the honor and glory of killing him. So he, like all veterans of the war, knew what to look for on the battlefield. If one watched carefully, at a closing medium distance, they could see the active camo creating a shimmering effect in the air from the Spec Ops trooper.

Suddenly, as John-117 was looking in Parker's direction, he noticed a strange, shimmering area in his vision, like the wavering heat haze that lingered around fired-up engines, moving closer to the man. Instantly, he knew that it was the camouflaged Elite stalking the Spartan-IV. With his senses on high alert, he reacted. He shoved the young man down, just as an energy sword slashed vertically where he once stood.

The Shipmaster faded into existence. He snarled through his mandibles at being denied his honorable kill. In a moment of rage, Zarpa Meham tried to backslash Chief, but he swiftly sidestepped the swipe. The Spartan retaliated by thrusting his leg out, kicking the zealot in the chest, and giving him the vital space he needed. The storm elite slid across the floor on his feet, with his shields taking the brunt of the attack and still holding at half strength.

The Sangheili roared in a righteous fury and charged.

Chief valiantly stood his ground, and brought his assault rifle to bare. His finger clutched the trigger, spraying the oncoming alien with a volley of bullets.

The elite's shields took several hits as he ran forward, but it did not deter him even the slightest. His lust for killing the demon overcame any logical sense.

When Chief's clip clicked dry, the zealot's shields finally fell. The shipmaster lunged, swinging his energy sword in a wide horizontal arc, aiming right for Master Chief's neck. The Spartan-II blocked the blow by taking a step forward and slamming his forearm against the elite's, stopping the attack in mid-slash. Never expecting someone to make such a bold move, the zealot was stunned for only a second, but a second was all John-117 needed. With his free hand, he unsheathed his combat knife and plunged the blade under the Sangheili's upper jaw.

Knowing that he would be taking the Great Journey in the afterlife, Zarpa Meham tried to say his last words. And yet all he could muster up were a few gurgles, no thanks to the dagger stabbed below his skull.

With minimum effort, Chief withdrew his combat knife, causing the Sangheili's corpse to topple to the floor.

Meanwhile, Parker steadily picked himself back up onto his feet. After, witnessing that the prominent Master Chief had saved his life, he had to swallow the lump in his throat.

"Um a... th... thanks for the save, Chief."

John-117 certainly wasn't new to rescuing people, so he was quite used to gratitude. Like many times before, he merely nodded his head.

Commander Palmer ran past the men and went up to the cruiser's controls.

"Cover me, while I download the data."

Using both hands, she began tinkering with the holographic consoles that flickered at her precise touch.

Chief was about to patrol the area to watch out for any more enemies that might drop in on them, but a surprised Kent stopped him.

"Hey over here! I found something!"

John marched over and saw that it was a crate filled with different

armor abilities.

"Looks like Zarpa Meham snatched a fine collection. It seems some of them were taken from Requiem and even a few that belonged to other Spartans. I wonder why he moved it to the control center?" Kent asked.

"Maybe he wanted to take them with him, if he had to leave his ship?" Parker deduced by understanding the elite's circumstance.

"Grab what you can. I don't appreciate UNSC tech being stolen," Commander Palmer called out.

Master Chief bent down to scoop up the equipment. He attached the hardlight shield, the device syncing up with his HUD. The Forerunner defensive technology may come in handy on the sprint back to the pelican, if any more Storm forces jump out from hiding. He stowed the rest in certain compartments in his suit. Being roughly the same size as a magazine of ammo, they were able to fit.

While she uploaded the information at the Covenant terminal, Sarah couldn't help but to peek over her shoulder at Chief. She knew that once she retrieved the intel, they would be able to pinpoint the location of Jul 'Mdama and the other half of the Janus Key. They would also know where the creator of the original Spartan-II program is; Dr Catherine Halsey.

She frowned underneath her helmet at the thought of the 'good doctor.' Dr Halsey was a war criminal, a vile woman who'd performed experiments that most would find at best ethically dubious. A mad scientist who had kidnapped innocence children, spirited them away from their families, and transformed them into living weapons.

With John losing so much in his life, Palmer distantly wondered how he managed to keep going.

She cursed at her luck that she only shot Halsey in arm. Hopefully next time either she or the Master Chief himself could finish the job, with a bullet to the head. A ding rang through helmet bringing her out of her thoughts, which signaled that the information had been successfully downloaded. Next she turned to her group.

"I've got the intel. Alright now we-"

Without warning, a powerful force shook the entire ship, nearly causing the team to fall to the ground from the tremble.

"What just happened?" Kent asked, hoping anyone would answer.

It was then that the Infinity's resident A.I. radioed them.

"Uh Spartans, I hate to be the bearer of bad news, but you have a problem."

"What is it, Roland?" Sarah Palmer said.

"With the engines blown off, the entire light cruiser is getting sucked into the nearby planet's atmosphere. If you guys don't get out of there in the next five minutes, all of you are going down with the ship!"

The very second the radio ended, they dashed off at high speed.

"Let's move it!" Commander Palmer cried out.

The super soldiers blitzed out of the command deck, and through the very door they entered. They passed through the halls they already came through, all the while the cruiser continued to rumble and the temperature steadily increased.

"These tremors aren't helping!" Kent cried.

"Neither is your complaining!" Parker retorted, stress building up as the situation worsened.

"Keep going," the Master Chief remarked rather calmly, having already repeated the scenario when he first found Requiem.

Finally they reached the hangar, with the Pelican still waiting. The oversized Storm platoon that once stood in the hangar bay to combat the humans were now carcasses brittled with oversized holes. Their bodies torn to pieces from the dropship's high caliber rounds.

"It's getting hot in here! Hurry up and get on board! We've got to go!" The pilot shouted through the comms.

"You don't have to tell me twice!" Kent remarked during the sprint.

The gunship hovered above the floor, still low enough for anyone to jump in for a hasty escape. There was a hiss as the rear cargo door opened and the ramp descended, while the engines purred.

"Come on, get in!" the pilot cried, desperate to leave the doomed cruiser.

Another monstrous quake rocked the ship, causing even the Spartans to fall to the floor. Broken metal parts rained down from the ceiling, explosions erupted from the walls, and alarms blaring; the ship was tearing itself apart.

Suddenly, a bright aurora of yellow lights flashed above the super soldiers. The flaxen streams shined down on them like the morning sun breaking through a dark thunderstorm.

"What the hell is that?" Kent gawked at the random appearance of the lustrous beams.

No one answered as the lights continued to shine down.

As of the timing couldn't get any stranger, the Infinity's A.I. spoke to them through the comms.

"Spartans, I'm getting a unusual energy spike coming from your location. What's going on over there?"

"Some sort of lights just popped up from out of nowhere." Sarah replied.

"Really? Can you-"

He didn't get to finish for the Commander hastily cut him off in a voice that showed no remorse.

"Sorry, Roland, but we don't have time to figure out what they are."

She quickly recovered, and rushed towards the aircraft, followed in closely by Parker and Kent. However, when they reached the Pelican they noticed that one of them was missing. The team looked back to see the Master Chief was still on the ground, the golden rays outlining his MJOLNIR armor.

Using all of his augmented strength, John-117 tried to get up, yet he remained frozen to the deck. It felt as if some unknown force was weighing him down. Amidst all the blaring noise, his enhanced hearing tuned in on the screams of the Spartan-IVs.

"Chief, get up! You got to get up!" Sarah Palmer shouted.

Unfortunately, the super soldier did not move, all he could muster were a few grunts.

The group ran back to him, despite the pilot's protests. They bent down to drag him to the gunship by his limbs, but he wouldn't budge. They attempted a second time, putting more strain on their muscles, still the Spartan-II didn't move; not even an inch.

"What's going on? He feels heavier than a Mammoth!" Kent said through tired breaths.

"It must be that light!" Parker deduced, exhausted as well.

"That doesn't make any sense! Is this some new tech from the Covenant?" Kent rebutted.

"We haven't seen something like this from the Storm. Maybe it's Forerunner?" Parker replied.

"Whatever it is, we've got to stop it!" Sarah Palmer exclaimed.

She reached over her shoulder and grabbed her DMR. The Commander aimed in the center of the rays and fired a couple of shots. The bullets faded through, and hit the ceiling. She pulled the trigger three more times, but the results repeated, as much to her worry.

"It's not working!" Kent hollered, while he strived to lift the Master Chief again.

None the less, Sarah continued to shoot frantically, until her magazine went empty. The annoying, dry clicks were as if her own tool was laughing at her failure.

"NO, NO, NO!" She yelled at the top of her lungs.

She nearly threw her weapon down in anger. It was proving to be absolutely useless in aiding her comrade, which only fueled her

temper.

"Commander," Parker solemnly went up and placed his hand on her shoulder, "There's no more time left. We've got to go."

Behind her visor, her mouth dropped like an anchor. The grim news caused her stomach to ache with a sickly feeling. She couldn't just abandon the same man who had saved the human race on several occasions. The very person who became hope of humanity and idol of other Spartans. Sarah violently swatted his arm off her in protest.

"NO! We don't leave anyone behind, especially not a Spartan!"

"Hey, something's happening!" Kent called out from behind them.

Both of them looked back to see that something indeed was happening. The Master Chief and the light were glowing immensely bright to where even they, with their polarized visors, had to shield their faces with their forearms. The '_light_' expanded, bathing the entire room with its luminescence. However, much like it arrived, in a very brief flash; it was gone, taking John-117 with it.

"Where... where did he go?" Kent spoke what was all on their minds. Unfortunately it went unanswered.

They couldn't believe it, though their eyes were the ones that saw it. There wasn't a single trace of the dark green armored goliath remaining. The space he occupied previously was simply... empty. He just inexplicably vanished before them all. They were utterly speechless.

The ship shook once again with a minor tremor. It wasn't strong enough to knock them down, yet it did remind them that they had to avoid their own imminent disaster.

The realization had washed over her like a bucket of cold water. She gasped as sweat poured from her skin, heart beating hard enough to be felt in her palms. She didn't want to accept the dreadful truth, but she knew they had to exit the doomed cruiser without the Chief. She had never left anyone behind before, except one; Spartan Davis. He stayed behind to fend off the Storm while she evacuated other UNSC personnel before the moon, X50 exploded. His death haunted her to this very day, and now another one's blood was about to be stained on her hands. She considered searching for the Master Chief, but reason won in the end.

"Get aboard the dropship! We've got to go now!" Commander Palmer barked, the first to speak.

Kent spun around to her, completely surprised by her decision. Just seconds ago, she vowed to bring Chief in the bird at all cost. Now she was saying to discard him?

"What? What happened about not leav-"

Before anyone could blink, she reached out and roughly grabbed him by the chestplate.

"That's an order, soldier!" Palmer snapped, driving the nail that she

was in no position to argue.

She then shoved him away.

Kent and Parker stared at her for a moment, still dumbstruck, but they hesitantly complied with their commands. All three rushed towards the gunship again, except they were one man short. They ran without looking back, though Sarah stayed a few steps behind in case one of them disobeyed her.

Their only means of escape laid before them while death loomed at their backs, fear and adrenaline pumping through their veins gave them speed beyond any of their augmentations could grant. Kent and Parker arrived first, a deep sense of relief overcoming them... then they remembered that there was still a third member to come on board, both men turn to see their CO. The sight that greeted them was of horror as the floor gave way. Sarah did what any person with any sense of self preservation would do, she took a literal leap of faith as she pushed herself off the crumbling floor towards salvation. For a brief moment as her body slammed into the dropship's metallic floor she felt the same relief her men felt, but then confusion clouded her thoughts as she suddenly noticed herself being drawn back. The men scrambled towards her and she realized death was not to be so easily denied.

Kent jumped and held onto her forearms while Parker grabbed his armored legs and activated the magnetic soles on his boots, thus keeping him attached as if an anchor. With a combined effort they pulled her to safety just when the explosion behind them reached its crescendo. They watched as the bay doors sealed itself and felt as their ship pulled them away.

With its armor severely weakened by the Infinity's MAC, the Covenant CRS-light cruiser's hull shattered into several pieces as it was pulled in by the planet's gravitational force. Friction continued to tear it apart when every single piece was sucked in for a nasty re-entry. Raging flames engulfed the junk when it reached Chi Rho's atmosphere and would soon impact on the former colony's surface.

However, the chaos around the ship was all secondary to Palmer as she stared at the Pelican's floor. Her fingertips were gripping her knees tightly, as if she was trying to pin herself to the ground. It was unbelievable, she almost expected to look across the shaking fuselage and see Chief sitting there, strong and stoic as ever. But the seat was vacant.

They cannot deny that now they were no longer in danger, they were thinking one thing... What has become of humanity champion? What has become of the John-117?

Captain Lasky's voice coming through the comms was enough to capture the soldiers' attentions.

"What happened down there?" he barked. His words were sharp and concise, obviously aware that something wasn't right, and he was intent on finding out what.

There was a small pause, where both Kent and Parker glanced at the silent figure of Commander Palmer, unsure of whether or not she would

speaking. When she did her voice was deceptively calm, and carried her usual, curt tone.

"There was a light, it held Chief down. We couldn't get him off the ground, and he disappeared."

It was obvious that that was all she was going to say, and so when Lasky's voice came through the radio again, the only thing any of the ship's occupants felt was a grim sense of finality.

"You're all reporting straight back to me when you're back on board."

Meanwhile with the Master Chief John-117

"Wake up, Chief... They need you..."

A gauntlet flexed, and then tightened, he could move once more. Experimentally moving his hands and feet, he discovered he was no longer pinned to the ground. His heads up display flashed to life with familiar readouts, showing that his MJOLNIR armor was not damaged. After assessing his own condition, John steadily picked himself back up, but what he saw was a very surprising sight to the Spartan-II.

He did not stand on the light cruiser's cold metallic floor, but rather soft trimmed grass. Unlike the broken purple walls of a dying Covenant ship, he stood in a small clearing that was surrounded by groves of vivid green bamboo. The mysterious _'light'_ was not flaring above him, instead it was single yellow sun amidst a crystal clear, blue sky. Its warm rays shined down on a statue in front of him, in the middle of the well tended opening.

The stone figurine was carved of six serpent-like creatures. They looked oddly similar to something he studied with the A.I. Dã©jã , during his childhood. Surveying the sharp claws, the viscous predator face, and scaly body; he guessed that they were fabled dragons.

It was a somewhat peaceful little clearing, but his senses remained on high alert. Judging by the pre-cut turf and the statue of dragons, he could easily tell that some sort of civilization made them. He held his MA5D firmly in his hands, prepared for a first contact scenario with a sentient species.

He knew he needed to contact the UNSC, so he could get back to the Infinity and report his findings. He activated his comms, and spoke.

"Infinity, this is Sierra-117. Do you copy?"

Alas all he got was static in return, the frizzing sound buzzed in his ears. He tried once more.

"Infinity, do you read?"

Sadly, there was no response on the other end, just more static. He gave up on radioing anyone, and now understood that he was all on his own.

John frowned underneath his helmet. He wished that _'she'_ was here

with him. Cortana would know exactly where he was and he wouldn't be alone.

"That light!" a deep male voiced boomed behind him.

At the fraction of a second, the Master Chief gracefully spun around and leveled his assault rifle at the possible threat.

There standing before, was a fully grown man wearing predominately white robes and a blue vest. Black armbands were strapped on his wrists, along with a grey sash wrapped around his waist. His face was shadowed by a straw hat.

But it was when Chief saw the eyes that made him doubt that the person was actually human. They glowed a bright blue with no pupils and seemed to radiate energy. They reminded him of the Promethean Knights prior to the Didact taking control of them.

Curiously enough, the stranger did not flinch or show any sign of fear when the gun was aimed at him. His face remained neutral, showing no emotion what so ever.

The super soldier briefly examined him for a concealed weapon, and he quickly noticed that the man had an amulet in his hand. And in the center of it was a symbol of a dragon, the same one like the six statues. There had to be a connection.

"The Elder Gods must have sent you! They heard me and so they have spoken through you! You must be _'him!' He who must win!_"

'Elder Gods?' the Spartan thought to himself as he never recalled anyone who referred themselves as such.

"Identify yourself." he ordered, finger on the trigger, ready to pull if things got ugly.

"I am Raiden, god of thunder, and protector of Earthrealm."

To be continued...

So what do you think?

**This was my first space battle ever, and I hoped I did a decent job at writing it. This was also my first time writing godly characters talking all godly and high'n mighty. **

Well Chief is going to have one heck of a time in Mortal Kombat. With only three clips of his assault rifle, a full batter on his Spartan Laser, eight magazines to his M6G magnum sidearm, and one of every armor ability from Halo 4. No he will not be able to use every armor abilities all at once. He will have to take off his current attached one and put on a new one each time.

This story did take me awhile to write. I know it is a bit long for a first chapter, but there was a lot to cover. The next chapter will definietly be tough to write.

**I know what some of you might be thinking; 'How can a first person shooter character like Master Chief fit in a third person hand to hand fighting game?' Well actually they did something like this in a

Dead or Alive game by adding Spartan-II Nicole-458 to their character list, thus was how we got the Hayabusa armor added to Halo 3.**

Also some of you might be wondering about the Elder Gods. In the old games, they didn't really have a physical appearance besides a floating opera-like face on one game. But Mortal Kombat 2011, they actually showed them what they looked like. I noticed that they looked extremely close to some ancient people like a samurai, and a shaman. You can't see them all, but I based the rest off other ancient warriors like a viking, indian chieftain, and etc.

**Next on the update list: Well after recently posting a rewritten chapter to my Halo/Tomb Raider crossover, I was hoping to post a new chapter to my Star Wars story. But I have a lot more written for my Halo/Mass Effect crossover, so 'From Hell to Hell' will most likely be updated first. **

2. Chapter 2

**Alright, finally got this chapter done. You won't believe how hard it was to write this chapter. Explaining how the Master Chief, a super soldier from the future who is used to fighting aliens with advanced technology, suddenly meets Raiden, a god who proclaims of magic? It was very hard, especially when I'm trying not to make it an entire info dump. It definitely took me awhile to write. **

**While this chapter was a handful, it wouldn't be here without some help. I would like to thank the wickedly talented Freedom Guard, the gifted Carleen, the dexterous and skilled Andithir, the adept Lord Izanagi, and last but certainly not least Poe's Daughter. Those accomplished writers helped make this story possible. Be sure to check out the work, or rather art. **

Well that's enough of me rambling, I'll leave more author's notes at the end of the chapter.

Enjoy the chapter!

Disclaimer: I do not own Halo or Mortal Kombat. Halo rightfully belongs to 343 Industries and Mortal Kombat belongs to Netherrealm Studios.

**Chapter 2: The Enemy of my Enemy is my Friend. **

In the realm of the Elder Gods

Once a marker for peace and prosperity, the realm of the Gods was now a scene of total chaos. With their powers drained, the six deities could no longer hold their world together. Fire had begun to rain down from once pink clouds, now a stormy black. Smoke and ash thickened the air. Barrages of lightning fractured the sky and thunder shook the ground. Those deadly shimmering bolts of light hit the ground with explosive destruction. The once carefully tended landscape was now torn and scarred, the gardens nothing more than smoldering craters.

The citizens, mighty gods fled their homes like frightened animals, hoping to escape the devastation. They prayed and pleaded to the only

ones who could stop the destruction, the Elder Gods, but they went unanswered.

The Elder Gods weren't listening. It was not their concern. They themselves were safe high up on a stone platform resting at the tip of a mountain, ignoring all the cries of the lesser gods. They knew they could easily rebuild the paradise once they regained their full strength. Their only interest was of their own survival.

The six Elder Gods gathered around a circle on the ground that showed an astral projection of the Spartan aiming his weapon at Raiden. It was their best option in watching how the events will unfold. But a heated debate was stirring amongst them. It disturbed them immensely on how they disagreed with one and another as they were always of a single mind. Except times were changing, forcing them to become desperate, a proven fact by their latest, rushed agreement. Half of them were furious with their decision, while the rest simply wanted to see what would happen next.

Some of them were utterly repulsed on how they used all of their vast power to bring in an unknown factor to their world. They had no idea if this 'Master Chief' could prevent the One-being from rising by changing the timeline. And if their parlous plan backfired, they were completely vulnerable to the omnipotent's onslaught.

The others knew they couldn't defend themselves from the One-being, regardless if they possessed their godly abilities or not. The only chance of survival was throwing all of their bets on a new fighter; a high stake gamble.

"So this is the _'champion' _that shall represent us?" The Egyptian Queen spat, while sending a nasty glare at the Greek. "The one whom which we have used all of our divine powers in summoning?! What do we gain from this? A false hope in preventing the One-being from returning?!"

Instead of mirroring the fiery gaze, the Greek matched it with her own confident smirk drawn on her ruby lips, and a gentle hand resting on her curvy hip.

"Do you suggest I take him back, dear sister?" Mirth dancing on the edge of her tongue in a playfully sweet, mocking tone. The Elder Gods knew they had used up all of their power in bringing the Spartan there, and sending him back now was impossible.

An unholy fury was building up in the Egyptian at the dry remark. No jokes should be spoken regarding the serious predicament. It took all of her will from not slapping the pretentious smug off her sister's pale face. But she stepped back and took a deep relaxing breath to compose herself. Anger wouldn't solve anything.

"I wish for you to know the consequences of your action when our time comes." the Egyptian said through clenched teeth and tighten fists.

The African shaman placed a comforting hand on her exposed, tanned shoulder.

"There is no need to cast blame. Each of us shared a role in bringing the outsider to Raiden. All of us are at fault if he fails. But why

are you so eager to assure that he has already lost?" Her words echoed with curiosity.

"You can see it for yourself! The very moment that we have brought him to Earthrealm, already he is threatening a God! We are surely doomed."

"Hold your tongue!" The Viking barked, his powerful voice boomed like thunder throughout the heavens. "Would you not react the same if you were put in his place? Thrown into an unknown world by a mysterious force, only to land at the feet of a being that refers himself as a God? The Spartan would be mad if he wasn't on guard."

"You hold so much ambition for him. What makes you believe in him? Do you think this mere mortal can defy Gods and Demons?" The African Shaman asked in a placid tone, directing her attention to the Greek.

"But he is far from a 'mere mortal.'" The Viking interjected, showing his support. "He is a soldier. All of us have seen him fight monsters in his own world. The way he saved his brethren in battle, was of a natural leader. His strength alone far surpasses any human."

The Samurai folded his arms across his tunic and nodded in agreement.

"Hmmm... his agility is most impressive. To be able to move as fluid as water and nimble like the wind, while wearing such bulking armor. Using those assets to stand up against horrific creatures that outnumbered him, requires much bravery. Perhaps this is a warrior worthy of our blessing."

The Native American Chieftain snorted in response.

"Warrior? He is a broken man, mourning the loss of something that wasn't even alive. I need to see more to be impressed."

"And so you shall my brother. He will be our shield and our sword against the One-being." The Viking announced proudly, banging his mighty fist on his broad chest. He craved to see how the super soldier will fair in more battles.

"He is but the tool, digging our graves. He will be our damnation." The Egyptian hissed with the venom of a cobra laced in her words.

"Our faith is based on chance; a flip of a coin. The risks are too high." The Chieftain added. He then glanced at the Greek whose soft eyes were glued to the portal below them. "You have yet to answer the question. Why him?"

She could not tear her gaze away from the Spartan, yet she acknowledged her siblings request.

"I did not choose him for his strength, swiftness, nor bravery. I picked him because I saw something in him that very few have. A power that not even we can control." the Greek spoke up in confidence. Everyone could see her optimism, a trait not shared between all of them.

"And what is that?" the African Shaman asked.

Finally she glanced up with a hopeful smile, lighting her young face.

"Luck."

...

***Back with Master Chief and Raiden* **

Breathing stable and sights trained, John kept his stance low. He had his rifle pointed on the being before him, ready to squeeze the trigger at a moment's notice. It was a humanoid male, close to human, but not quite. Adrenaline pumping through his veins, his senses were on full alert.

Despite the one who held the gun, he was at a disadvantage. His mind was racing with hundreds of questions that demanded answers immediately. He did not know where he was, how he got there, or who caused it.

He thought back on how he could've landed in such a predicament. He was on a mission with Commander Palmer and two other Spartan-IVs. He had been sprinting through a doomed Covenant light cruiser after retrieving vital information on Jul Mdama. The ship had taken severe amount of damage from the UNSC Infinity, and was collapsing from the nearby planet's atmospheric pull. Then at the last moment, just when he was a mere second away from boarding a Pelican, a mysterious light suddenly burst out of the room that froze him to the floor. Now he was at some sort of shrine-clearing, surrounded by bamboo, and facing a man in a straw hat. Someone who referred to himself as Raiden, God of Thunder, and Protector of Earthrealm.

"You may lower your weapon, I mean you no harm." Raiden said calmly, keeping a steady composure even with a firearm aimed at his face.

The Master Chief's head was on a swivel, meeting eyes with this 'Raiden' character. Their concentrated stares locked. The pressure on his right index finger tightening ever so slightly, yet not enough to release an orchestra of bullets.

The reaction made by this being before him when faced by his assault rifle made John even more wary. It was perfectly clear to him that this figure was no ordinary human, even possibly not human at all. The thing had glowing eyes with no pupils, and what seemed to be literal sparks coming from him. It appeared similar to a fully grown man wearing predominately white robes and a blue vest. Black armbands were strapped on his wrists, along with a grey sash wrapped around his waist. His face was shadowed by a straw hat. The choice of clothing resembled that of some long forgotten movie vids that he and the others got to see every now and then.

He refused to lower his rifle, not until he got an idea of where he was. There was far too much going on for him to just take this stranger's word. The only reason a Spartan would ever shoulder his gun was either when ordered by a superior officer, or when the weapon was out of ammunition. With three more clips for his MA5D and no commanding officer around, he kept his sights zeroed in on this

'Raiden.'

"Where am I?" the Chief demanded in question.

It was not a shout nor a bark, but there was an edge in his words. Gravelly words that said if he did not get what he was asking, there would be dire consequences.

"We are near the Wu Shi Academy; a sanctuary to train shaolin alongside Earthrealm's defenders." Raiden replied in a neutral tone, showing no imitation.

The super soldier frowned beneath his helmet. The answer only raised more questions. He had never heard of the term, 'Earthrealm.'

Earthrealm? He said that before, he said he was the protector of Earthrealm. Earthrealm, Earth. Are they the same? He thought to himself, connecting the dots in his head.

"What planet is this?"

"As I said before, you are on Earthrealm or as most mortals refer to it as; Earth."

John-117 took a moment to digest this information. If he was indeed on Earth then that would explain how this Raiden character knew English, or how the clearing around them had a touch of human culture. But he still had some concerns.

"How did I get here?"

"You were brought here by the Elder Gods. Could you not tell by the light?" The god raised an eyebrow, while his eyes continued to radiate energy.

So the light and these Elder Gods were related in someway. Another piece of the puzzle solved, but there was more to put together. He had no idea who they were or why they brought him here.

"Who are the Elder Gods?"

Raiden was shocked at the armored stranger's question, yet he kept an emotionless demeanor. How could he not know of the Elder Gods, if he was summoned by them? He was beginning to think that this person was not aware of their influence. He couldn't blame him though, for most mortals in Earthrealm were ignorant of other realms as well.

"The Elder Gods are the supreme deities of the universe. Where as other Gods only have jurisdiction over a single realm and represent an element, the Elder Gods are ethereal and have power in all realms. Did they not inform you?"

The Master Chief shrugged off the question, only to quickly throw another one of his own.

"Why did they bring me here?"

"I asked them, prayed to them. We need your help."

"My help?" parroted the Spartan, confused.

"Yes, if the Elder Gods brought you here, then you must be _'he who must win.'_"

Raiden waited for the green goliath's next short question, but none came. He simply stood there in a ill silence, unmoving as stone. Raiden furrowed his brows at the lack of responses from the armored man. By listening to the soldier's queries the god learned that this stranger knew absolutely nothing of Mortal Kombat. For a brief second he wondered why the Elder Gods would send someone as such, but then paid the thought no heed. He never second guessed the Elder Gods' judgment. Perhaps they tasked himself as the one to inform this unusual challenger?

He remained calm and quickly began to think of a way to convince the man to relax. It was not that Raiden feared the gun, more of the Thunder God not being keen on wasting time when there was far too much at stake. He did however note that the soldier was showing quite a lot of himself through his actions rather than words. He liked what he was seeing thus far. The man's stance was perfect for him to have pin-point accuracy and precision with his weapon. His focus on him was excellent. Legs slightly spread, weight on the balls of his feet, ready to lunge forward. No doubt if given the right opening he could land a brutal hit. It reminded the thunderer of a predator ready to pounce.

The aura the man emanated was that of a battle hardened warrior. The dented chest piece and worn metal spoke of someone who had plenty of combat experience. With those scars, he must had faced many enemies to have made it this far. Those were the signs that made the Thunder God believe why the Elder Gods chose him. This made Raiden all the more determined on trying to prove to this new fighter that his desire to be his ally was a genuine one.

However, Raiden had to be careful with the one in the dark green armor. He could sense the built up tension within the stranger. He knew the slightest mishap; the tiniest mistake could cost him the only chance the Elder Gods had given him. He had to be impassive, patient, and informative lest he set off the ticking time bomb in front of him.

"I see you are new to this realm. I shall provide you with answers that may elude you."

...

The odd-looking man's sudden desire to be cooperative made John even more wary. Years of training in covert operations and intelligence gathering, balanced his caution. While not talented in that field like Grey or Black Team, he had enough to know that sometimes to get information, one had to make a compromise. Gaining data was never simple and it took time to get the right material. Moreover, it made him realize that perhaps the only way to get the answers he needed was to let thisâ€¦ being speak.

With that in mind he decided to lower his assault rifle, though he held it in his arms if he needed to quickly use it. The motion did not go unnoticed by Raiden. It seemed to be the action that would now break the proverbial ice between the two of them.

Finally the Master Chief spoke again.

"Talk."

Raiden nodded.

"According to ancient legend, in the beginning of time, there only existed the One Being and the Elder Gods. The One Being fed off of the essences of the Elder Gods, but eventually, the Elder Gods defeated the One Being. In an effort to weaken the One Being's omnipotence, the Elder Gods separated the One Being's consciousness into the realms. Earthrealm is one of those many realms. Each realm prospers as their own world. However they are still sustained to attacks from other realms."

"One such is Shao Kahn, the Emperor of Outworld. A brute of a warrior and master of the black arts that rules with an iron fist. He spans the multiverse conquering worlds one by one. He will stop at nothing until all of the realms are under his control. Merging his realm with Earthrealm will increase his power tenfold along with Outworld's. Thus the Elder Gods created the Mortal Kombat tournament to give Earthrealm a chance to defend itself. Only through winning Mortal Kombat may Shao Kahn merge the realms." Raiden continued.

"You want me to fight in this competition." It was not a question asked by the Master Chief, but an accusation.

"No. The tenth tournament has already passed. Our champion, Liu Kang defeated Shao Kahn's advisor Shang Tsung, saving Earthrealm. Or so I thought. The realms are in constant flux. They shift and change akin to an endless dream. Shao Kahn's defeat should've marked our victory against a threatened merge of Earthrealm and Outworld. Instead, it heralded a new struggle for independence."

As Raiden spoke his tone ran slower, more grim. What should have saved the world he swore to protect, only burdened him in anticipating for another attack.

"Prior to Mortal Kombat, I have foreseen events, like memories of my future. In my visions, Shao Kahn becomes invincible. He destroys all life in Earthrealm. We will all die. I believe these flashes are a guide to defeating Shao Kahn. But disrupting the flow of time can have serious consequences."

Raiden slowly reached to his chest and grabbed his amulet. Carefully, he showed the medallion to the armored soldier, revealing all of the cracks around the dragon emblem inside it.

"My amulet is connected to the future. Whenever the future remains unchanged, it receives further damage. _'He must win'_. Those are my last words before I die. I believe it is you who must win. The Elder Gods chose you to represent them." he said while hooking the amulet back on to his chest.

Once the explanation was over, Raiden tried to read what the unknown warrior was thinking. Gods were famed for being all knowing, predicting the next thought and motivation of any mortal. But the man before Raiden was like a statue, without expression or movement. He looked for the barest hint of a facial expression, but he failed to

see anything past the polarized visor. He only saw his own cold, golden reflection. What disturbed him though was he could sense turmoil within the green armored soldier. Was it doubt plaguing his mind?

...

As soon as 'the God of Thunder' finished explaining this 'Mortal Kombat', John could only stare at him and think that the man was insane. Not slightly insane, but certifiably crazy to the level of the mad Prophets; who wanted to purge the galaxy by activating the Halos. A close dementia that the Didact showed when he used the Composer to digitize the people on Ivanov Station and then the population of New Phoenix.

He did not know what to think about what he heard from this being. But it was enough to convince the super soldier that this 'Raiden' or whatever he was, was a completely unreliable source of information. He was better off finding a way out of this place and contact the _Infinity_ for immediate pickup.

Raiden was unaware of the thoughts flying about in the brain of the Spartan, and soon spoke once more.

"And you have your answers. Now we must leave this place for there is-

Before Raiden could finish, he was cut off at the stranger's next surprising move. The man turned and left, walking the only cleared path to the shrine. The deity was stunned, never expecting an act as such.

"What are you doing?!"

He paused only for a moment to declare,

"I'm not going with you."

Raiden could not help but be astonished by the sudden refusal of the armored fighter before him. He had done all he could to explain to him the situation involving Mortal Kombat and what was at stake. He told him that the Elder Gods sent him here to help change what was to come. But instead, the chosen of the Elder Gods before him merely left and turned his back on him.

No! he thought I was mad! He refuses to believe me!

Raiden contemplated about that even more and recalled that prior to joining the team to defend Earthrealm, Johnny Cage and Sonya Blade expressed great skepticism towards it all until they took part in it themselves. Perhaps the same thing was happening again with this new warrior. If that was the case, he must not give up so easily.

He needed to take a different route in persuading the armored being. Like the other Earthrealm defenders, he had to appeal to the stranger's singular characteristic, give him a reason to fight. He knew this man was a soldier, and a soldier was bound by duty.

Had found a new set of determination, he then followed the man. Raiden could not afford to lose this new warrior and he will not fail

the Elder Gods' generosity.

...

With that said the Spartan turned around and left, no longer willing to listen to Raiden. The so called 'God of Thunder' was now seen as a certified lunatic who was to be avoided at all costs for him. He quickly tapped into the communications of his MJOLNIR's helmet and tried to raise the _Infinity_.

What was next was unclear, but he had to find a way to make contact with the UNSC, report his situation, and get debriefed.

He activated his comms, and spoke.

"Infinity, this is Sierra-117. Do you copy?"

Alas all he got was static in return, the frizzing sound buzzed in his ears. He tried once more.

"Infinity, do you read?"

Again, no answer. He opened his channel wider for a more broad signal. There had to be somebody out there, or any military forces in the area.

"To any and all nearby UNSC forces, come in. This is Sierra-117. Do you copy?"

Sadly, there was no response on the other end, just more static. Something had to be wrong. He quickly scanned the MJOLNIR's BIOS and saw they were still operable. He then did a full systems check on the COMs and found that there was nothing altered at all. Why couldn't reach anyone?

If he was truly on Earth, he should've been able to contact the UNSC with no problem. He should be able to see Pelicans fly overhead, or bright lights shining from nearby cities. Instead there a clear sky in midst of some bamboo forest. Everything looked rather... primitive. He gave up on radioing anyone, and now understood that he was all on his own.

Technically he should be half way across the galaxy, way too far from Earth for him to suddenly land here at random. The only ones capable of such fast slipspace travel was the Forerunners, but he hadn't seen any of their technology nearby like on Requiem.

Something indeed was very wrong.

Theories and hypothesizes whirled in the John's mind, forcing him to try, and think about where things were headed, what was going on here. His augmented brain processed information faster than any normal mind ever could, but he found himself suddenly longing for Cortana. As an A.I. she could had calculated everything, run through a list of millions of possible theories before the Spartan could even blink. She would know what to do, she always did.

He needed to get back to the _Infinity_ and maybe then his request to see Dr. Halsey would at long last get answered. He wanted to ask his mother if there ever was a chance to save Cortana. It would at least

give him closure. The familiar ache burned in his chest again, his throat tightening. He took a moment, inhaled a deep breath, swallowed the sense of failure that coursed through him, forced it down, deep inside his gut, and let out a powerful exhale.

He had been in these situations before; lost on an unknown world, like in Installation-04 or Requiem. Each time he had escaped and found a way to put down the enemy. However this was different. _She_ wasn't here. Cortana was there to guide him through their first Halo. She was the one who was able to contact the _Infinity_ while he fought wave after wave of Prometheans. He put his life in her holographic hands, and she was able to see it through the end... _her_ end. Without her, it was as if this was a whole another scenario. He was lost and alone, truly alone.

He stared down his alien surroundings, trying to make something of the situation. He was surrounded by groves of vivid green bamboo. The orange sun was setting over the horizon, night would fall soon. He could hear his boots thump against the green grass as he marched on. A true divergent compared to the warzones he had survived through.

It was then that his ears picked on another pair of softer footsteps trailing behind him. His motion sensor highlighted a blip just a few feet at his six. A humanoid shadow was at his side, telling him someone was in fact following him. He did not have to glance over his shoulder to know it was the 'Raiden' character. In less than two seconds it was already beside him, walking as if it was a casual stroll.

The Master Chief kept his head straightforward, not even dignifying a glance. He was about to ask the obvious question, but it died on his lips when the 'Thunder God' spoke first.

"You may not believe what I have said of Mortal Kombat, and I do not have any ill feelings on that regard. Your disbelief is warranted after all, but I wish to tell you that the very reason you are here is indeed of the Elder Gods' work. Only they have the power to take you from where you once were and send you here."

The Spartan's answer was a defiant silence. That did not stop Raiden from pressing on, while they both walked on.

"I have watched man grow over the ages. Most lack the experience with magic, but they counterbalance with their adaption in technology. Such machines allude me, but I know no mortal possess the armor you have. You are not from this realm. I can see the Elder Gods did not bring you here, by your own choice. But know this, with every decision they make there is a specific reason, one that can change everything."

Raiden waited for an answer, but the only one he got was their foots marching in the grass. So he pressed on.

"They expect something great from you. You are burden with such a grand undertaking. I may not know where you come from, or who you are, but I know what you are. The way you walk, how you react, your posture; you are soldier. And a soldier fights for those who cannot."

The Chief couldn't argue with the delusional rants from Raiden. However, his primary objective was to get back to the _Infinity_. _Up ahead he saw a fork in the road, splitting between left and right. He needed to choose a path, and leave the crazed person.

Finally, the super soldier spoke.

"It's not my concern."

"This may not be your realm, not your fight, but our goals are one in the same; protecting the Earth. A distinction without a difference. Without your aid, innocents will die at the hands of Outworld. Could you live with that on your conscious? Could you be so soulless as a machine?"

At the mention of soulless machine, John stopped dead in his tracks. A cord had been struck inside his memories. Before _she_ died, she said something him about being a machine. How she wanted him to promise her, to be more human. And then it dawned on him, he had been in this position before, leaving to find the UNSC or stay and fight the enemy. Captain Del Rio wanted to abandon Requiem with the _Infinity_, _while he wanted to stay and fight the Didact before he could reach Earth. Except now, he was Del Rio.

When Del Rio left, the Didact was able to find the Composer on Installation-03. The Forerunner took the weapon and made his way to Earth, easily smashing through the home defense fleet. Then the Didact used the Composer on the city of New Phoenix. Within the blink of an eye, an entire population was reduced to ashes.

If the _Infinity_ _had only stayed on Requiem they could've defeated the Didact there, and saved so many lives. The scientists and doctors would be researching more artifacts on Ivanoff Station, the UNSC home fleet would be at full strength, the innocent civilians in New Phoenix would've continued to thrive, and maybe... just maybe, Cortana would've been at his side once more. His chest ached at the thought.

All because of the foolish decision of one man.

Underneath his helmet, he frowned and clenched his teeth. Unconsciously, he held his assault rifle tighter in his arms.

_No. _the Master Chief concluded in his mind. He would not make the same mistake of the former Captain Del Rio.

He turned and faced Raiden, the latter who then spoke in a serious tone.

"The Elder Gods do not forget those who come to their aid," Raiden continued. "If you are successful in your task, the Elder Gods will return you to your world. You have my word. You have the Elder Gods' promise."

"Take me to this threat."

"I cannot, but in due time our enemy will reveal itself. When that happens, you must be there. You must be the one who must win. You must change the flow of time. You must save Earthrealm."

John-117 weighed his options. He may not fully believe the 'Thunder God', but it was his duty as a Spartan-II to protect Earth and all of her colonies. And if there was a way home, then he needed to take the chance. Of course all of it could be a hoax. If this 'Shao Kahn' never shows up, he could just as easily leave.

"Come, I will take you to the Wu Shi Academy. A haven for the other heroes." Raiden said as he took the path on the right in the fork of the road.

He hesitated for just a moment, glancing at the left, thinking that was the road he would've taken. In the end, he followed Raiden, and then asked something he picked from the 'god's' last words.

"Others?"

"Yes, in every realm, a few warriors are chosen to defend their realm. Gifted with magical powers, they are far stronger and faster than that of their own kind. There are other fighters from Earthrealm who fight to preserve it. But be wary for there are also those who thrive in chaos, greed, and more who kill only for their own desires. You will meet them soon enough."

In a short fifteen minutes, they came upon a structure that could pass off as an ancient fort. The Master Chief deduced that it must have been the sanctuary Raiden mentioned. He noted the pair of fifteen foot high, stone red doors. The slant of the terra cotta rough lines. He could smell the heavy odor of sage and incense. His eyes caught the sight of a humanoid disappearing from atop the walls. No doubt a sentry post.

"May I know your name?" Raiden asked, stirring the super soldier from his thoughts.

One of the biggest secrets of a Spartan was their name. It was a treasured attachment the super soldiers remembered about their past before their strict training. There were only a select few to ever call him by his real name; Cortana, his fellow Spartans, Dr Halsey, and Chief Mendez. Any others that said his name, just felt wrong to him. So he told Raiden, the same he told to everyone else.

"Master Chief Petty Officer Spartan 117." It was rigid and formal, straight shot, and screamed of someone who was military.

He studied Raiden's face, waiting for a reaction. Yet all he got was a blank stare, as if he accepted the answer.

Suddenly, the two large doors creaked open, and revealed everything behind it.

Cut green grass pastured the ground other than the stone sidewalks. Temples stood tall at the edge of the walls, made of the same rock material, with red roofs of ancient Chinese architecture. A center platform suspended by five massive statues remained in the middle of it all. Several shao lin monks performed routine kicks and punches for training exercises. But what surprised him the most was there actually other humans.

His ears burned at Raiden's next words.

"Spartan, welcome to the Wu Shi Academy."

In the Netherrealm

In the realm that was as dark as the sinister hearts that inhabited it. A world where the only light came from the erupting volcanoes and the lakes of fire. The ground itself was composed of layers of hot igneous rock rather than dirt. There were no chirping birds or howls of mammals, but the never ending orchestra of crazed laughter from mad demons and wraiths. They laughed in maniacal glee at the blood curdling screams of the tortured damned. The guilty cried in utter pain as their charred flesh burned forever, a fate worse than death. A hellish land where the strong thrived at the suffering of the weak.

The Netherrealm had produced many vile beings, but none rival the Arch-Sorcerer; Quan Chi. One whose skin was white as chalk, aside from the red oni markings etched on his arms and shaved head. He remained shirtless, revealing a well toned upper body, which showed that magic wasn't his only weapon in combat.

An aura of sickly green fumes flowed from his ghostly white body as he meditated in peace, relishing the dark magic coursing through his veins. Sulfur and brimstone filled his nostrils as the screams of a thousand tormented souls chimed in his ear. Quan Chi smiled. He had grown accustomed to the smell and sounds of the Netherrealm. In a way it was calming, it allowed him to focus on his plans. He chuckled to himself at how things were progressing.

Everything that his master had predicted was coming true. The shaolin monk Liu Kang had defeated Shang Tsung at the tenth Mortal Kombat. It was only a matter of time before Shao Kahn issued the next tournament in an attempt to merge Earthrealm into Outworld. However, he was foretold that Shao Kahn would lose the next competition as well. But through the conquer's failure, brought Quan Chi closer to his own victory. Soon both forces would be weakened from their petty skirmishes, and the Netherrealm would have its glorious chance to strike at them.

No sooner had he strengthened his resolve, he felt a characteristic heaviness in the air around him. Breaking his concentration, the green fumes stopped smoking from his figure.

He stood up and turned towards the focal point of the power just as the familiar form of his master came into view. A large image of a head began to materialize from thin air.

"Lord Shinnok." Quan Chi fell to one knee, in deference to the avatar of the fallen Elder God.

"Rise, Quan Chi." Shinnok's voice was distant. His disembodied head, larger than life, was obscured by a glowing purple haze, which was constantly shifting, distorting the appearance of the avatar itself.

"How may I serve you, my master?" Quan Chi inquired, as he got to his feet.

"Something has happened in Earthrealm, something not even I

understand." Shinnok replied, disturbed that the all knowing, did not know everything. "The Elder Gods... have used a vast amount of their power. They changed an event I have not foreseen. This may be a threat to my plans, a threat that must be dealt with."

Quan Chi's red eyes widen in alarm, his cold heart skipped a beat. All of those years of planning, carefully setting events into motion could be ruined for one unexpected occurrence. He'd be damned to let anything stand in his way of triumph.

"How would I seek out this disturbance?"

"I shall teach you an incantation spell to find the anomaly. Go forth and aid the foolish Shao Kahn in the next tournament, just as planned. Make sure it does not hinder what I have already set in motion. Time is of the essence." The image fell silent. A moment later, the former god's avatar seemed to retreat back to the Netherrealm.

Quan Chi bowed, respectfully and obediently.

"At once, my lord."

When Shinnok's head had faded from existence, the necromancer turned and went off at his task.

Flames licked quietly at the ground, in the same way they had for eternity. The pillars of corpses that lined the path continued to writh in agony as the souls of the fallen continued in their futile struggle to release themselves from hell's grasp.

But to the man strolling through, vanquishing embers under his feet with every step he took, the sight had been witnessed a thousand times before. The figure with white skin and red tattoos sauntered his way through the Netherrealm landscape without a hint of regard to the scenery around him.

All of Shinnok's plans were in full effect. The fallen Elder God was convinced that nothing could stop him, and his hubris would be his downfall. Quan Chi touched Shinnok's Amulet on his belt and relished at the thought of having kept the real one to himself. He was still learning how it worked but he already felt his strength augmented. His lies and trickery became more natural. His control over Scorpion became stronger. His constructs were more powerful, and the undead warriors were easier to control. Soon he'll be able to unveil his newest minion; Noob Saibot.

Quan Chi had so many pieces in place, there was no way things would fail. Shinnok's plans were dependent on him, therefore the fallen Elder God could not expose himself just yet. In the mean time Quan Chi was building in his fail safe. All the connections and allegiances that he made in Shinnok's name would pay off for him instead. He smiled as he felt the amulet's power coursing through him. There was nothing that could stop him unlocking the secrets of the amulet each day and Shinnok could do nothing, but wait.

He came to a pause in the middle of the path. Smiling wickedly, he raised a hand to summon a portal. As one formed in front of him, a swirling mass of purple energy that hissed and crackled as the edges began to grow. The bodies in the pillars robotically stretched out

and tried to reach for the only visible exit, completely immune to the realization that their attempts were in vain.

Quan Chi waited for the portal to safely finish forming before walking through. Within seconds he found himself in the emperor's throne room, where he saw Shao Kahn glaring down at a kneeling Shang Tsung.

The necromancer knew this was when Shang Tsung would propose the second tournament. Shinnok had told him that Shao Kahn would accept the idea, yet fall in the end. However, it was all apart of the plan for the Netherrealm to one day dominate all realms.

And they would be coming to fruition right about...
now.

...

***Shao Kahn's Throne Room, Outworld* **

"YOU FAILED ME! Five hundred years, I have waited! Now I have to wait five hundred more!"

Shao Kahn paced his grandiose red throne room fuming, enraged by the news that Earthrealm had won the tenth tournament.

Shang Tsung, his form betrayed his ancient age and his torn robes in his defeat, placed before the emperor. Restrained by the Tarkatan representative Baraka and Reptile, the last of his Saurian race. Princess Kitana stood behind him with both of her steel fans closed in her hands. The Centaurian champion Motaro and the Shokan champion Sheeva flanked Kahn's throne with the skulls of the conquered at its base. The only skull above Kahn was the skull of the Dragon King Onaga whom Kahn usurped to take leadership of Outworld. It was a reminder to all who was in charge.

"My lord, all is not lost." Shang Tsung cried desperately for he knew he stood upon the brink of death after falling from his master's grace.

But Shao Kahn turned his back on him in disgust, ignoring the whimpers.

"Curse the Elder Gods and their tournament! I should have taken Earthrealm by force!" the warlord growled, and then sat upon his throne. "But I am bound by their rules. Rules that cannot be broken."

"My lord!" the sorcerer pleaded again.

The bellow fell on deaf ears as Shao Kahn waved his hand to his adopted daughter. The only solace that he got was that he would see an execution.

"Kill him."

Shang Tsung gasped as Kitana spread her bladed fans, while Baraka and Reptile held him down, their fingers dug into his shoulders. He struggled to get his arms free, only it was pointless under the enforcers' grip. His death was mere seconds away. In the heat of the

last moment, he was struck with inspiration.

"But what if the rules were changed!"

"Kitana." Shao Kahn called to his step-daughter, throwing his hand out, and halting the brutal demise before it had a chance to begin.

He met the Edenian's eyes, whom said that she craved in ending the slimy sorcerer's life once and for all. Except his curiosity got the better of him, pushing her wishes aside. He leaned in his throne, casting an intrigued glare at the frightened old man.

"Continue." He said in a tone that made Shang Tsung realize that the slightest mishap would end with his head rolling on the floor.

Baraka and Reptile released the sorcerer. He rose, dusting off his shoulders then bowed to one knee.

"My Emperor, as you know the Elder Gods designed Mortal Kombat specifically to slow Outworld's annexation of other realms. With the system of ten tournaments held every century of which all must be won consecutively for a claim to a realm. However, we could challenge Earthrealm to one decisive tournament held in Outworld. If Outworld wins, Earthrealm is ours but if Outworld loses then we give up on Earthrealm forever. The Elder Gods must accept this offer."

Leaning back into his throne, Shao Kahn thought deeply about Shang Tsung's latest scheme. He didn't like the idea of giving up on Earthrealm forever, but this offer was too good to go to waste.

"Very well, I shall allow this tournament**."**

Shang Tsung released the deep breath that he had been holding. The idea worked to his advantage. He would live to fight another day, to collect more souls of young fighters.

"Thank you, my lord. I will begin preparations at once. Although, if you will me to compete in this tournament I will need... revitalization."

With a hint of annoyance at such a petty request for a almighty being of his magnitude, Shao Kahn flexed his hand. From his fist, he released a green aura of the multitude of souls he contained. The souls slithered through the air and surrounded Shang Tsung.

And as simple as that, the sands of time reversed on the decrepit sorcerer. Age old wrinkles unfolded into a layer of smooth, flawless skin. Dusty, gray hair was recolored to a sleek black. His frail, skinny arms bulked up in muscle mass to that of a bodybuilder. Shang Tsung smirked for he was a young man once more. He looked up at his master with determined eyes that could be only found in a youth.

"You will compete to redeem yourself. You have my permission to use the soul pits enough to reach your peak." the warlord declared.

Shang Tsung could not help, but let his snide smile grow to his cheeks. He kneeled.

"I am most grateful for your judgment, my lord."

Shao Kahn narrowed his eyes in warning. Never to allow any gifts without a clause.

"Do not get used to it. If I ever receive a whisper of failure, I will personally oversee your extensive torture before I tear you asunder."

Shang Tsung rose from his bow.

"Master, with the tournament in Outworld, victory is yours."

Suddenly a deep, but familiar voice echoed through the throne room. One which made them all turned at the sound with a snide.

"Another tournament? How interesting."

Everyone knew who it belonged to, yet none of them were glad to hear it. Outworld may have sided with him during the tenth tournament, but he was one not to be trusted. His allegiance was to the Netherrealm.

"What is it that you want, Quan Chi?" the emperor barked.

Stepping from out of the shadows, an evil grin grew on the necromancer's lips, causing others to be more cautious of it.

"I merely seek cooperation between Outworld and the Netherrealm." His voice smooth and sly, as if he was innocent.

"Why should I influence myself with such scum once more?"

Quan Chi stopped with a grim look, taking on a serious demeanor. To persuade Shao Kahn, he needed to get straight to the point.

"It would seem that the Elder Gods have acted on Raiden's endeavor. I felt their power, even in the depths of the hell, though I'm not sure what they have done. Whatever it is, may present a threat to your plans of conquering Earthrealm."

"And why come to me sorcerer? For protection? I'd kill you before they even get the chance."

"I may not be in good graces with the Elder Gods, yet neither are you. Even with the Netherrealm at my side, standing against them is but a foolish act. However, if we were to unite, there is a chance to survive. With the Elder Gods gone, you will be free to merge Earthrealm with Outworld."

Shao Kahn grumbled, seeing at how right Quan Chi was. In his many years as a conquer, he knew that multiple forces could overpower a single enemy.

"How would you find this anomaly?"

"I know of an enchantment spell that can track the Elder Gods' essence. Whatever I enchant, will lead the wielder right to it the moment they step into Earthrealm. "

Shao Kahn reflected on this proposal for only a short time. The desire to crush a new realm and harvest its souls was burning within him. And he didn't need the Elder Gods standing in his way.

"And what do I gain from granting this bold request?"

Quan Chi inwardly smirked, knowing he was winning the debatable truce. But he dared not get overconfident.

"Help me deal with this common enemy and you shall receive the Netherrealm's loyalty and services throughout this second tournament."

Shao Kahn stood up from his throne, revealing his full seven foot two height.

"Very well. A temporary alliance it is then. Now we must make preparations for the tournament." He then pointed his finger at his advisor, ordering him like a god to a peasant. "Shang Tsung, go to Earthrealm and tell Raiden of our competition."

Like several times before, the sorcerer bowed respectfully.

Shao Kahn turned to the blood thirsty Tarkatan in the white vest.

"Baraka, you will accompany Shang Tsung. Make sure they accept our 'invitation.'"

Baraka also bowed and turned on his heel to leave the throne room so he could gather his Tarkatan brothers. His fingers twitched frantically, excited that his blades may pierce his foes' hearts.

Shao Kahn faced Quan Chi with a smear etched under his skull helmet. He did not trust the Netherrealm necromancer, anymore than a rabid animal. Yet he needed the hell scum in finding this Elder God threat. He would have to assign a pair of eyes on him.

"Quan Chi, go to the Soul Pits. There you will find Ermac regenerating. Make use of my creation in finding this threat. I wish to know what the Elder Gods have done. Tomorrow, Earthrealm shall enter it's final days."

****End Chapter****

****So what do you think? Master Chief meets Raiden, the Elder Gods are arguing with each other, and Shao Kahn and Quan Chi team up once again.****

****Even though Chief is following Raiden to see this threat, he isn't entirely convinced yet. He still doesn't fully believe in magic, or if he is on Earth. But he will think twice in the next chapter when he meets more Mortal Kombat characters. If all goes well, then the Master Chief might get a chance to fight something from Outworld. And those of you who know the Mortal Kombat 2011 storyline then you what**

the Master Chief will be fighting when Shang Tsung arrives to tell Raiden about the next tournament. **

**Now a lot of you have been asking me a very common question regarding this story... pairings. It's kind of odd since there has only been one chapter, but okay. I have this entire story thought out already, BUT it's the pairing issue that I haven't got nailed down yet. I don't know who to pair with who. Several people have already suggested quite a few characters like Sonya Blade, Kitana, Jade, Mileena, Skarlet, and Frost. Those are great suggestions, each with their own merit. Still I'm not sure who to pair with who. If you guys would like to suggest on the pairings and why, then I'm all ears.
**

Just in case anyone is confused with the plot, I thought I clear things up. It takes place in the middle of Mortal Kombat 2011. It is after the first tournament where Liu Kang has defeated Goro and Shang Tsung, saving Earthrealm. And as to the plot, Raiden notices his amulet is still cracking, meaning Shao Kahn's Armageddon is still coming in the future. It is before Liu Kang gets his medal for winning the Mortal Kombat tournament like in the game. Unlike the game Raiden goes off and prays to the Elder Gods, why is his amulet still cracking. Raiden asks for the Elder Gods help.

**Meanwhile the Elder Gods are worried. Being all knowing, they see in the future and know their sworn enemy will eventually rise again; the One Being. They have seen constant outcomes of the future, and no matter what they change, the One Being will return. So they decide to throw all of their chips on the table. They decide to summon an anomaly, something that will change their time line yet such a thing won't let them see the outcome. One of the Elder Gods has been watching a certain someone over the course of time. After seeing him in action, they choose the Master Chief. And seeing Raiden praying to them with his own dilemma, they take the opportunity to send Chief to Raiden. Thus Raiden will think the Master Chief is 'he who must win.' **

As for the Halo side, it takes place six months after Halo 4. I wrote this before Halo Escalations so none of that happens or the Halo 5: Guardians trailer. Chief is still grieving from Cortana's death. To cope he has been doing countless missions for the UNSC, securing colonies, and killing several Storm forces. His next mission is with Sarah Palmer and two other Spartan-IVs. They are to board a Covenant Storm Light Cruiser and download vital information on Jul Mdama. The Infinity disables the Light Cruiser's engines so it won't fly off, while destroying its escorts, two other Light Cruisers. The Spartan team boards a Pelican and lands in the damaged cruiser. After they sprint through the ship, have a few fights, they eventually download the information. Unfortunately for them, the cruiser has taken too much damage, and is falling apart. They run through the ship, and at the last moment, before they can board the Pelican to leave, a bright light shows up. The light freezes the Master Chief to the floor and only him. The Spartans try to get him up, but nothing can move him. So they are forced to leave him. The Master Chief disappears in the light, and the ship explodes.

The Master Chief lands in the Mortal Kombat universe and sees Raiden. That is the first chapter.

**Next on the update list; Halo/Mass Effect crossover: 'From Hell to

Hell.'**

****Response to guest reviews:****

****dickbutt:** And here is more, with more on the way! Nice name by the way, hilarious.**

****Guest1:** Thanks for the complement, I'm very glad that you're enjoying the story so far.**

****Ilikepie:** It makes me very happy to hear that you liked the space battle. It was my first one, and I wanted it to be awesome! Master Chief is indeed a great character, probably my favorite character of all time.**

****WOLF (SPARTAN-626):** Oh Chief will be kicking a lot of ass in the story, and in the next chapter! I hope you liked the Chief and Raiden meeting. In the next chapter, Chief will be meeting more Mortal Kombat characters like Johnny Cage, Sonya Blade, Jackson Briggs, and a few more. As for pairings, that is something I am still thinking on.**

****Guest2:** I'm glad that you liked the first chapter. I hope you enjoy the second one!**

****Lover:** Maybe. I'm still thinking on the whole pairing issue.**

****Hoser23:** Thanks for the complement, I spent a lot of time on the first chapter. I rather enjoyed it. Who is Chief going to be paired with? I'm not sure yet.**

****JC:** You should definitely check out Mortal Kombat 2011. It has an amazing story. You can find cut scenes that play the entire story on youtube. **

****wolf:** Yeah I know that Dr Halsey is a mother figure to the Spartans. I mentioned it in the first chapter and in this one. But other people won't see her like that, such as Sarah Palmer or Tom Lasky. They would think she is a monster for kidnapping children, and would think the Spartans would want to kill her. **

"

3. Chapter 3

****Hello there readers.** Now I normally don't make these 'author notes only posts,' in fact I was never going to make any of these type of posts. I always thought it was bad for a writer to do this, since it's a fake tease unless they have a preview of the story in it. However, under these terrible circumstances I will make an exception for this one time. That is why all the words are in bold, it's an author's note post. While I will talk about this story later on in this post, there is some troubling news I need to tell you all.

****It pains me to say this, but we have lost one of our own.** Freedom Guard, whose full name is Salvador R. Balleza has passed away. On the 5****th**** of August he had went through cardiac arrest. Cardiac

arrest is a sudden stop in blood circulation due to the failure of the heart to contract effectively or at all. When Freedom Guard went through it, they were unable to resuscitate him.**

**We have lost a great writer. Salvador had written forty-three stories, two concept ideas, and one story challenge. He had a vast knowledge of several categories, ranging from Halo, Mass Effect, Justice League, Marvel, G.I. Joe, Vandread, and so many more. With his vivid imagination he was able to expand on those categories' and write his own works of fiction. Sure his characters weren't always in character, and he had some run-on sentences, but damn it he had a natural talent of capturing someone's attention. Freedom Guard wrote in the third-person point of view in all of his stories. He did a wonderful job in writing characters' thoughts, opinions, and expressions in his story. **

**I was able to see how dedicated he was to writing and to others inspiring to write. When he posted a chapter, it had a numerous amount of pages worth of content, all up in a short amount of time, much quicker than I can ever hope to be. **

**Yes to some they will be losing a writer, but to me, and few others, we are losing a colleague and a dear friend. If you look up in the author's notes in most of my chapters, you will see Freedom Guard's name up there, and how I thank him for helping me. With almost every problem I ever had, whether writing related or even personal, I came to Freedom Guard and he was happy to lend a hand. He was there to offer advice when I needed it, and bounce ideas off when I felt creative. Every writer usually hits that old problem 'writer's block,' but when that happened to me, Freedom Guard would write out examples how an idea could happen, making writer's block all the more easier to breeze through. He was even able to look over my chapters before I posted them, whether he asked for them or I asked. He was practically my own Beta-Reader, and one of the best I ever had. **

One of the things he taught was how to manage my stories. I, like many writers, have ideas just begging to be written down. Freedom Guard showed me that while it's good to have that light bulb flashing, you got to keep yourself in check and not overwork yourself. Looking at all of his stories, he told me how having so many made it extremely difficult to update them all and satisfy the readers. So now I write down any ideas on my profile page so I can eventually get back to them. And when I post a new story, I make sure it's entirely thought-out so I don't stop abruptly.

**Without Freedom Guard, I bet I wouldn't even have half the amount of chapters posted now. And the ones that would be posted would lack some creativity. Did he make me the type of writer I am today? No, I can't give him all of that credit. But he was a part of the ones that did. I know for a fact he was also the one who inspired many more writers to be at the computer, and he was there to help the ones who asked. Sometimes he would actually seek out others that could use the help, which was how we met. He came to me when I was writing my Halo/Mass Effect crossover. I was brand new to fanfiction, and a terrible writer at the time. But he messaged me telling me I did a good job for a beginner, and have a lot of potential. He helped me reach some of that potential. And we have been friends ever since, for many years. **

****Freedom Guard, you may be gone, but you will not be forgotten, not by me at least. You may not be here anymore to give me advice, but I will always think 'what would Freedom Guard do?' With your stories out there, I hope others will take some inspiration from them. In this life and the next, you will always be my friend. ****

****Rest in peace, Freedom Guard. With all of the work you did for fanfiction and others, you deserve that peace. ****

****Now regarding the story, man it feels selfish saying that after the dedication to Freedom Guard. But here it goes.****

****I am still continuing my Halo/Mortal Kombat crossover, I have just been incredibly busy with a job, and some heavy personal problems. To be honest with you guys, and to help put things into perspective to understand what I am going through, this is the worst summer of my life and probably will ever be. Lets leave it at that. As proof that I am working on the next chapter here is a quick preview of the next chapter. Enjoy.****

*****At the Wu Shi Academy, China, Earthrealm*****

The two large doors creaked open, and revealed everything behind them.

Cut green grass pastured the ground other than the stone sidewalks. Temples stood tall at the edge of the walls, made of the same rock material, with red roofs of ancient Chinese architecture. A center platform suspended by five massive statues remained in the middle of it all. But what surprised him the most was there were actually other humans. Numerous shaolin monks performed routine kicks and punches for training exercises.

His ears burned at Raiden's next words.

"Spartan, welcome to the Wu Shi Academy."

He zoomed in on his visor, the built in binoculars going to thirty-two X in a matter of milliseconds. The Master Chief looked them over several times, he had to be sure. Their eyes didn't glow like Raiden's and they had regular shaped heads, hands, and feet. From a distance everything checked out. He switched back to normal vision and blinked once, twice, three times. There was no mistaking it. They, the monks, were indeed human.

His eyes and mind conflicted with one another, logic and reasoning arguing back and forth. All he had were thoughts and assumptions. Maybe he was on a forgotten colony. Perhaps a settlement hid during the Human-Covenant War. Or... or he could possibly be on Earth.

It was true, this place was a lot like a primitive Earth, but what were the odds? Something wasn't adding up, and he didn't like it. And yet, he felt strangely... calm. When he first stepped into the residence of monks, it was as if a peaceful sensation washed over him. After years of war and combat, it was different to be so relaxed. Almost alien to him. He wasn't sure if it was Raiden and his shaolin that gave off this atmosphere of tranquility, but it didn't matter. The Spartan knew none of these people, so he remained on edge. He had a mission to find some threat, and he would be sure to complete it. Then he would find some way to get back to the

UNSC.

Raiden began to walk ahead of him and further into the academy. If John wanted answers, he had to follow the supposed 'protector of Earthrealm.' It grated him to think like that, but he kept his own temper in check, and focused on getting what he needed to know.

And it was then, Raiden spoke.

"As I said before, this is a safe haven for Earthrealm's defenders. It is here where other heroes and shaolin train to protect our realm. All are welcomed here, especially you, chosen of the Elder Gods."

While they strode through the sanctuary grounds, curious stares of the monks' shadowed him, but as Raiden passed by they bowed in respect possibly in... worship. The super soldier took note that Raiden was indeed a person of high influence around the area. Valuable information for another time.

"Lord Raiden." A man's voice called out.

Tracing his sight to the speaker ahead, John-117 saw two more people running towards them, though they were much different from the rest of the monks.

The one in front wore a red head band that held up his black shoulder length hair. He was suited in a ebony color gi over his well rounded physique that screamed he was a fighter. Matching the shades of the head band was a sash across his waist, above bright red pants. In the middle of the sash, brandished the same symbol of the golden dragon like the statues in the clearing and Raiden's cracked medallion.

The other shaolin, only a couple paces behind, wore a onyx vest with two medieval lion emblems on his chest with light blue pants. His light blue pants was a noticeable contrast to his friend's colors. But the most distinct feature was the hat. Like Raiden's in shape, except it was a dark rimmed, and seemed to be sharper, almost razor like with its silver outline.

The duo stopped before the god of storms, both baring expressions of concern. They had wondered where he had wandered off to during their time of celebration. Only to reappear with an armored titan behind him.

"Lord Raiden, is everything alright?" the one in red spoke again, the Chief recognizing the voice from a second ago.

Raiden came to a halt, not returning the signs of emotion like the humans facing him.

"Yes, Liu Kang, I am fine. I needed to seek solace from the Elder Gods." The Thunder God responded in a monotone. "There is someone I would like for the two of you to meet."

**See you all soon. **

**Rest in peace, Freedom Guard. **

End
file.